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EDITH WHARTON.

BY ROBERT SENCOURT.

THE genius of Edith Wharton came slowly to fruition. Though she had published a short story before she was thirty, several more years went by before she brought out her first book, and she had taken time to learn her work, since those days when, as little Pussy Jones, she had avowed that her chief ambition was to follow her mother in being the best-dressed woman in New York. Ripeness, we might say, was all to her : for it was the completion of her huge energies to be thorough : she must therefore have risen to greatness in any walk of life. She was a woman of temperament, and far preferred the society of men. These surrounded her with an atmosphere of romantic admiration till the last days of her life. Always eager for fresh encounters with young minds, and the discovery of new talent, she was yet remarkably faithful to the Victorian classics, as well as to a little circle of friends, and of these most had come, like herself, from America to make their homes in Europe. Although she refused to waste her time on social acquaintances, she had the instincts of the *grande dame*, and dispensed to the guests she chose the most finished hospitality. Her servants stayed with her for decades, and worshipped her into a certain subjection to themselves. Her cooks were always excellent, and her wines exceptionally choice. The appointments of her table were faultless, and the decoration and arrangements of her houses, the Pavillon Colombe at St. Brice-sous-Forêt, and Ste. Claire-le-Château at Hyères, made each room into a picture, while each was also most

comfortable to live in. The latest books and reviews showed at once a mind that knew at once how to make its selection, while her library was that of a scholar. But if her house came to a perfect rightness by its mingling of sumptuousness with simplicity, and both with comfort, not less admirable in their success were the vistas of her garden, where the profusion of flowers would fit themselves into a background of effect with building, and gradually lose themselves in trees or stretch of view. She added a man's strength to the sympathy and solicitude of a woman, and a man's organising power to a woman's interest in dress and *décor*. Her intellectual interests never distracted her attention from homely details, and her manners and tastes were simple. Yet there was no writer of her time who lived in better society. She knew, of course, the writers from Aldous Huxley to Paul Bourget, from Paul Valéry to Barrie or Basil King. She was often with Americans of position, like Madame Balsan, and Lady (Alan) Johnstone. She was received in the most exclusive circles of French and English society, and called the sons of princes by their Christian names. But her closest friends, though highly cultured, had not names widely known and with them she kept in touch with the America of her youth. She was of warm heart, strong feelings, regular habits, tireless enterprise, and above all, of will. Though her interests were wide, her memory was tenacious, and exact, and her judgment singularly happy.

Born of an American family of assured position, fortune had favoured her, and though she was not at first rich, the rise of land values had made her private resources ample, even had she not been able to add to them by the successes of her plays and books. But although so highly gifted in mind and fortune, she suffered much. She was married young to a man who was never quite an intellectual com-

panion for her, and afterwards became a neurasthenic. He could neither give her intellectual sympathy nor satisfy her heart, and she attached herself with all the strength and ardour of her nature to another, the judge and lawyer, Walter Berry. Living in that high level of American society which looks on divorce as vulgar, she finally divorced her husband, and all believed that this was done with the intention of marrying the man she admired. But she did not marry. Walter Berry had given her intellectual sympathy, but he amused himself with younger women, and in her heart Mrs. Wharton knew he was unworthy of her. Finally, he and her husband died in the same year. Her own life reeled under the shock, but she recovered to produce in the last twelve years of her life much of her best work ; for unless in *Ethan Frome* and *Artemis to Actæon*, she never produced better work than in her *Twelve Poems*, in the short stories she called *Certain People*, or *Human Nature* ; and her autobiography, *A Backward Glance* will live for ever in the history of American Literature. It is the finished record of her fine taste and sense as traveller, as connoisseur, and as woman of the world ; its background is not Europe, but New York as seen and known by a family who, even if not wealthy, counted in the days when America, though not compromising its own individuality, enriched its culture by keeping it close to that of Europe. But Mrs. Wharton's standards were incorrigibly European. She had much less in common with the Joneses than with the handsome young English tutor who taught her brothers before she was born. Good tone mattered so much to her that for the last twenty years of her life she felt more at home in Europe than in New York ; she felt that America was running away from the things which she, when a young American, had cherished as the best of its heritage. Yet she

never lost touch with the United States, and her last long novel is the vivid story of a young writer who comes out of the Middle West, and never comes very near to the life, nor the successes, which Mrs. Wharton herself richly enjoyed. This novel, *Hudson River Bracketed*, tells much about her real life, while *A Backward Glance* tells more of her tastes than of the life she actually lived with her closest friends.

The giant display of energy when over seventy was more than even her strong system could stand. In 1936 she had a stroke of paralysis and was seriously ill—in the spring of 1937 another stroke made her life still more precarious, and after managing the move from Hyères to St. Brice, she died on August 11th in her home, near Paris, the Pavillon Colombe. In those failing months she was cared for by an Italian friend, Mrs. Royall Tyler, whom she made her executrix and to whom she left her Château at Hyères. And it was fitting end to her long loyalty to European tradition that the parish priest at St. Brice should finally have commended her to eternity.

II.

To the world who did not know her in her completeness, she was put down as a great novelist: and certainly as a novelist she deserved a reputation, and enjoyed success. Her first big novel was *The Valley of Decision*, published in 1902; but she became more popular as a novelist twelve to twenty years later, her popular successes being *The Custom of the Country*, *The Age of Innocence*, *The Children* and *Twilight Sleep*. But these were not really her finest work. The one novel which all acclaim is *Ethan Frome*, which was published in 1911. The style is there as perfect as the characters are vivid, the description haunting and the narrative arresting. This book is almost as telling in its own way as *The Scarlet*

Letter, and the subject is not dissimilar. But where there the fancy is luxuriant, here there is the beauty of frosty starlight and snow. The subject was to haunt Mrs. Wharton for the rest of her life, the subject of adultery, or rather of the moral struggle against passion when a marriage, in itself unsatisfying, has put the new love against the law. This preoccupation was soon remarked, and she herself relates in her autobiography that a correspondent wrote to her, 'If you ever have known a respectable woman, for heaven's sake write about her.' At the same time, she notes also that, as the years went on, she was considered by many young Americans to be prudish. She was indeed far from ever tolerating a taste for what she herself once called 'dirt for dirt's sake.' Her instincts were moral, conservative and, as the years went on, she felt that the spiritual tradition of the Church was essential to the background of civilisation both in culture and common sense. It was typical of her that one of her homes should have been built for the mistress of a sovereign, and the other had been a crusader castle before it was a convent.

A preoccupation with the old conflict in her heart remained. As a woman she never grew old. Fine as her sense was of the ironies of life, especially as they made themselves felt in certain crucial instances, she ended as she began, sympathetic, delicate and passionate. Others, besides Walter Berry, had disappointed her; but she cared eagerly for men almost to the last. She knew what she wanted out of life, and she wanted much, but not more than she knew how to attain—companionship, amplitude, social rank, all associated with culture, with the expression and development of herself in her beautiful houses, and all these subordinate to her life and career as a writer, commanding the respect of continents and leaving a legacy to time. She had the tastes of a scholar

and a scholar's relentless passion for accuracy of detail : indeed, there were times when she seemed like the perfect pupil of the perfect governess : but this obedience to learning's discipline was the freedom of her fineness ; it was due to her sense of nuance ; she had what Dante called the habit of art : a developed dexterity which answered to a refined instinct for beauty. The soul of a poet lived eager to the end in the efficiency, the knowledge of society, the control of position and the widely cultivated taste of this ever-completer woman of the world. The best brains of Europe were at home with her. But she chose friends that were 'far from the dust and rumbling,' and history will know few of their names. She prized above all exquisiteness of finish, without ever being weakened by this choice, or allowing it to alter either her long faithfulness or her enjoyment of adventure.

III.

In Cyprus, and in Morocco, she found materials for such excellent writing that we can imagine her enjoyment of her journeys in Spain, or her last visits to Rome. And in one sense she still remains to be discovered. For it is not only as the creator of *Ethan Frome*, as the most excellent of her novels, that she will find a place in the studies of unborn professors of Literature. In *Morocco* shows her to be one of the most brilliant picturers of the Moslem world ; there she has written a travel-book that deserves to be cited with *Eothen* or *Monasteries of the Levant*. In *The Writing of Fiction* she produced a masterpiece of criticism, a book of the highest importance among studies of the novel : a book which her biographer, Mr. Percy Lubbock, recognised as excelling his own *Craft of Fiction*. She produced another classic of description in *Italian Gardens*, and among con-

siderable writers she was the first to publish an appreciation of Rome's baroque architecture.

But her finest work is other than these, and even less widely known. It is her poems, and of these the finest, both in the complex texture of their expression, their range of imagery, their fine base of thought, their intensity of passion, and their austerity of calm, are the sonnets of *The Mortal Lease*. Their qualities evoke the memory of *Modern Love*, and almost of the sonnets of Donne and Michelangelo.

*'Because the currents of our love are poured
Through the slow welter of the primal flood
From some blind source of monster haunted mind,
And flung together by random forces, stored
Ere the vast void with rushing worlds was scored,—*

Shall we deny . . .

The stubborn questing for a phantom shore ?'

That is the opening question, and she elaborates it in the succeeding sonnet :

*'Shall we forego the deeper touch of awe
On love's extremest pinnacle, where we
Winging the vistas of infinity
Gigantic on the mist our shadows saw ?'*

She had within her the blood of 'the wild woodland woman,' the nymph beside Ilyssus, the entranced nun, and wished to dance her life out in one moment of primeval silence and primeval intimacy in tides of trembling light. But is the most exalted experience of passionate communion enough to satisfy the heart of man ? No, she answers, this is not enough. We sense the fulfilment of the promise in the words that utter it ; we taste the joy of a desired presence when an instinctive sense tells us already of the touch of silent fingers on the latch. The most eager joys of the pulse when rapture directs the battle between conquest and

surrender : these joys of passion are less than deprivation gives :

*'Not thou, vain moment ! Something more than thou
Shall write the score of what mine eyes have wept,
The touch of kisses that have missed my brow,
The murmur of wings that brushed me while I slept,
And some mute angel in the breast even now
Measures my loss by all that I have kept.'*

That told what Browne had called 'the proper tenure by which we have the earth,' that was the mortal lease. Patience through pain, grief that becomes that helpmeet of the heart, the calm and waiting while tragedy unfolds a secret more august, here was the power of what a Christian would have called The Cross. In depths of the heart too dark for her to see all clear Edith Wharton had accepted it. Her feelings might be too eager to acquiesce in silence, but her will was one with the law of the universe which had been implicit in her suffering. What relief she found came to her both in the other developments of life, and in suiting her strength to her exquisiteness in the sharp etchings, where words mingled imagination with experience. But grief remained, and as she insisted, will be served apart 'with uncommunicable rites, and still surrender of the undivided heart.'

Mrs. Wharton particularly prized the poem she calls 'Life': and there are some fine lines in it, but it is not original nor forceful enough. She was not always the best judge of her own work, and as some mothers in their defensive instinct praise most their most unworthy children, she was inclined to invite attention to her less meritorious work. She has related how she welcomed criticism, and, at the age of sixty-seven, thanked a young English writer for advising her to delete several pages from the opening of *Hudson*

River Bracketed, and acted on the advice. Yet some thirty years earlier when Mr. Charles Scribner in accepting a novel had ventured the opinion that it might have been shorter, she silently transferred her business to another publisher. Mr. Scribner thought to the end she had been lured by more attractive terms. It was not so. She was always grieved that no one bothered about *A Son at the Front* among her novels, a forced and ineffective war story, written by one who did not understand the trenches, and she used to insist that *Summer* was really a better work than *Ethan Frome*. She was touched with the welcome to her autobiography, and said she felt it necessary to correct false impressions. But there is much of her life of which one can see nothing by following *A Backward Glance*, and some of her friends thought that this book was designed to throw sleuth-hounds off the scent.

Two of her most effective pieces, and she knew it, were her dramatic monologues, *Vesalius in Zante* and *Margaret of Cortona*. Vesalius, who died at Zante in 1564, had been the great anatomist at the University of Padua, but gave up his chair in time of difficulty to become the court physician of Charles V. There are some memorable lines in this poem, the tribute, for example, to St. Ignatius Loyola :

What he willed, he willed,
As those do that forerun the wheel of fate,
Not take their dust—that force the virgin hours,
Hew life into the likeness of themselves
And wrest the stars from their concurrences.
For who rules now? The twilight-flitting monk,
Or I, that took the morning like an Alp.

The last line is of course an echo from *Cenone* :

‘Gargantua . . .
Stands up and takes the morning.’

And no doubt Mrs. Wharton was haunted by her careful reading of Browning and Tennyson. She had no wish to break with tradition, and though she admired the best of Whitman, and especially *Voyage to India*, she much preferred to discipline herself to the rules of blank verse. The model of Browning can be felt in many lines of *Margaret of Cortona*, but the passion there is Edith Wharton's own, the passion which culminates with the end of the poem. Mrs. Wharton takes a legend, not accepted by the authorities, that St. Margaret was at first saved from the streets, by the man who certainly made her only his mistress; it was not till after his death that she became a nun. These are the closing lines:

'If ever prayer hath ravished me so high
 That its wings failed and dropped me in thy heart,
 Christ, I adjure Thee! By that naked hour
 Of innermost commixture, when my soul
 Contained Thee, as the paten holds the host,
 Judge Thou alone between this priest and me.
 Nay, rather, Lord, between my past and present
 Thy Margaret's and that other's—whose she is
 By right of salvage—and whose call should follow?
 Thine? Silent still.—Or his who stooped to her,
 And drew her to Thee by the bands of Love?
 Not thine? then his?
 Ah Christ—the thorn-crowned Head
 Bends . . . bends again . . . down on your knees
 Fra Paolo!
 If his then Thine!

Kneel, priest, for this is heaven?

Browning could not have written this passage, but he would not have disdained it, and it has a deeper significance, with not less dramatic points than *Romney's Remorse*. In *Moonrise over Tyingham* and *All Saints* she comes nearest to Herbert

Trench. Very moving are the stanzas in the latter poem in which she in her way suggests that all the days and nights of Shramandazi are not worth an hour of yonder sun :

Does the heart, she asks,

*' Does the heart still crave the spot it
yearned on*

*In the grey and mortal years,
The pure flame, the smoky hearth it
burned on,*

The clear eye its tears ?

*Was there in the narrow range of living,
After all the wider scope ?*

*In the old, old rapture of forgiving,
In the long, long flight of hope ?'*

She could sometimes be extraordinarily successful in simple lyric effects : as for example in one stanza she wrote in her maturest years on heart disease :

*' Death touched me where your head had lain,
What other spot could he have found
So tender to receive a wound,
So versed in all the arts of pain ?'*

And during the War she wrote a remarkably successful poem, *The Tryst* ; it is a dialogue with a woman whose house has been destroyed by the invaders :

*' I said What look have your houses there
And the rivers that glass your sky ?
Do the steeples that call your people to prayer
Lift fretted fronts to the silver air,
And the stones of your streets are they washed and fair
When the Sunday folk go by ?*

*My house is ill to find, she said,
For it has no roof but the sky ;
The tongue is torn from the steeple head,*

*The streets are foul with the stains of the dead,
And all the rivers run poison red
With the bodies drifting by . . .*

*I said there are countries far from here
Where the friendly church bells call,
And fields where the rivers run cool and clear,
And streets where the weary may walk without fear,
And a quiet bed, with a green tree near,
To sleep at the end of it all.*

*She answered : Your land is too remote
And what if I chanced to roam
When the bells fly back to the steeple throat,
And the sky with banners is all afloat,
And the streets of my city look like a boat
With the tramp of her men come home ? . . .*

*I shall crouch by the door till the bolt is down
And then go in to my dead.'*

Yet that poem is not more telling in its voice of sympathy for the poor than the first story Mrs. Wharton published in *Scribner's Magazine* in the early nineties : *Mrs. Manstey's View*. It was just a sketch of an old lady, who had once been to Europe and always wanted to live in the country. And this old lady died of a broken heart in a boarding-house in New York because a neighbour was going to build an extension which cut out her view. But it was so finely done, so touching, that it might almost have been written by Maupassant : its close is a fine example of the style in which Mrs. Wharton was to write for another five and forty years :

'She tried to make them open the window, but they would not understand. If she could have tasted the air, sweet with the penetrating ailanthus savor, it would have eased her : but the view at least was there, the spire was golden now, the heavens had warmed from pearl to blue,

day was alight from East to West, even the magnolia had caught the sun.

'Mrs. Manstey's head fell back, and smiling she died.

'That day the building of the extension was resumed.'

It was always just in that way that Mrs. Wharton wrote her best stories. As neat as O. Henry, with that fine simplicity of phrase in which her friend Henry James had written his early masterpieces, and with that touch of grimness which she shared with Hardy, and added to these a certain intimacy and delicacy which showed it was the woman's heart which counted suffering in terms of tiny things, her style sparkled from time to time with phrases of delicate expressiveness all her own :

'Orion flashed his cold fires.' 'Their eyes met and clung together desolately.' 'They flew on through the dusk, gathering smoothness and speed as they went, with the hollow night opening out before them and the air singing by like an organ.' 'My heart tightened at the thought of the hard compulsions of the poor.'

These odd phrases from *Ethan Frome* are index enough of her sense of style, and her art in attaining it. But for the masterpiece to be complete, she needed either full romance or else some crucial experience in a primitive setting. For America aroused her irony as Europe could not do, and without that irony she was never sure of her tragic effects. For this reason, *The House of Mirth* is a much greater book than *The Valley of Decision*. But Mrs. Wharton did not altogether enjoy her cruelly vivid sense of a certain deficiency among the class-emancipated crowds of the United States ; to her Europe had something of the strangeness and romance which the Wild West of Cowboys and Red Indians had for the English schoolboy of forty or fifty years ago. She could describe Europe to perfection as in *Italian Villas*, *Italian*

Backgrounds or *A Motor Flight through France*, but, though she never felt that grudge against it which Henry James revealed in *The American* or *An International Episode*, it was evidently not so entirely grown into her inner consciousness that she could use it as imaginative material in the way she uses certain aspects, and not the most elegant aspects, of the United States. As a writer of stories, she forfeits her finished cosmopolitanism—when she is classical she is American. And her European stories stand in comparison to her American ones as *The Marble Faun* stands to *The House of the Seven Gables*. She respected Europe too much to satirise it : and though she had always lived on an elevation, she could—like Lady Russell, or Miss Sackville-West—write with a peculiar vividness of the middle-class lives in which she could never have contemplated mixing.

IV.

For Mrs. Wharton made all her choices well. There is one memorial of them in *The Book of the Homeless*, a book she edited and published in 1915 to collect money for the Belgian refugees. She had founded in November, 1914, a Relief Committee for the Children of Flanders. In the following April the Belgian Government asked her to take charge of some six hundred and fifty children and a number of helpless old men and women from ruined towns and farms. To help them, she asked a number of distinguished people to contribute to a book. The list of contributors is an index of her position among the writers of France and England : Maurice Barrès, Laurence Binyon, Paul Bourget, Rupert Brooke, Paul Claudel, Jean Cocteau, Joseph Conrad, Gosse, Hardy, Paul Hervieu, William Dean Howells, Henry James, Francis Jammes, Maeterlinck, Alice Meynell, Paul Elmer More, the Comtesse de Noailles, Agnes Repplier,

Henri de Regnier, Edmond Rostand, George Santayana, Herbert Trench, Verhaeren, Mrs. Humphry Ward, Margaret L. Woods and W. B. Yeats ; there were also Igor Stravinski and Vincent d'Indy ; it was introduced by Joffre and Theodore Roosevelt, it was illustrated by Max Beerbohm, Jacques-Emile Blanche, Charles Dana Gibson, Claude Monet, Renoir, Rodin and Sargent. Yet among all the contributions from these shining names, none can really be said to surpass the contribution made by Mrs. Wharton herself ; it is the verse dialogue already quoted, *The Tryst*.

Mrs. Wharton was decorated by the Governments of both France and Belgium. She had the Grand Cross of the Order of Leopold, and was an Officier of the Legion of Honour. She enjoyed an equal prestige both in the Académie Française and in the Faubourg St. Germain.

In the course of war work, she wished to obtain a permit to travel from Paris to London, and went to a British diplomat whom she had often met in society. He told her it was impossible. 'I could not give it to you, Mrs. Wharton,' he said finally, 'not if you were a Duchess.' Mrs. Wharton did not forget the remark ; and she was not surprised to learn that at a later juncture of history when crowns were falling, this diplomat showed a Queen a lack of courtesy which made his name mud among the royalties of Europe. But what could be expected of a man who was so gauche as to compare her invidiously with a Duchess ? Mrs. Wharton had not been nonplussed by him, however. 'I went on,' she said, 'to Lord Granville, and although I had never met him before he gave me the permit at once.'

A French or English ear could detect at once that Mrs. Wharton was an American ; she had never been unusually beautiful ; nor was she particularly witty as a talker. But brilliance and distinction were her natural *milieu*, and with

them womanliness. She had no need to suit herself to sets or fashions. There was in Western Europe a certain cosmopolitan society where, whether they were celebrities, or whether Print had never noted them, everybody was well bred, everybody had brains, everybody had taste. It was one of the most delightful circles in the world. Although she never scrupled to go beyond it—and put up with some successful American women, or some handsome European men—it was in this society that Mrs. Wharton moved at her choice, with an authority that was never asserted, and never questioned. Here her subtlety was appreciated; here warmth of heart was understood; here there was always room for choice and enterprise; and yet, even though she paid visits from time to time, and entertained so beautifully, and was so well the creative mistress of her homes and servants, her power of decision gave her that amount of solitude which enabled her to produce around the age of seventy works which complete the tale of those which mark their creator as unique among the women of America; she takes precedence of all who went before her in the unity of her finish, and her wholeness with her rightness.

AN IDYLL.

BY THE REV. P. B. CLAYTON.

Readers who have preserved a state of ignorance about Toc H may well find this narrative of fact vexatious or confused. May it be prefaced by the explanation that All Hallows-by-the-Tower is the Guild Church of Toc H, a Movement which emerged from Talbot House in Poperinghe? The membership to-day is happily diverse in age and in denominational allegiance. Most of the men are young; they are concerned mainly with social service of many descriptions in their neighbourhood. The Old Guild Church, famous among much else for silvered gilt plate of the time of Laud, affords an anchorage acceptable to many thousands of Toc H to-day. What follows tells the story of two pattens bestowed upon the Treasury of the Church some years ago. The tale has remained unprinted, until both sisters have departed this life, most truly in His fear and His favour.

ONE autumn afternoon a very fine old lady, like a rheumatic grenadier, in a stiff alpaca habit, came out of Mark Lane Station and started to cross Byward Street. There is a brood of minatory cabs which are permitted to come to rest at this spot, dividing the roadway as the caisson of an uncompleted bridge will stem and separate a stream. Commending her soul to God, and her body to the adventure, the very old lady stepped from the granite kerb into the tide-race of the street. She gained the cabs, and took breath. Encouraged, she dived again. . . . It was really no one's fault; and, since no final mischief came to her, the stumbling run which brought her to the gutter on the desired side

passed unobserved. She picked herself up, gathered a black reticule to her, and gained the further pavement as a spent swimmer gains a landing-stage.

Before her stood a City Church's doorway, unencumbered by any adhesion of humanity. Yet folk came in and out, and seemed no worse for their experience. She wondered whether this was indeed her goal. Consulting the letter open in her hand, she read with undimmed eyes 'All Hallows Porch Room,' and then observed that, at the very corner she had reached, a sign swung out, brave with a gay device creaking on twisted iron. Beneath it yawned a second similar doorway, and round the lintel ran a scroll which read 'Abandon Rank all ye who enter here.' The motto had no meaning in itself, but yet the indication was propitious. It savoured of her nephew, seen seldom during these forty years of recent history. She stepped inside, and found a few dark stairs.

These won, she found herself within a room, one wall of which was plainly medieval. Her artist's eye observed a grille of iron over a chamfered window, both of indubitable antiquity. The room itself seemed like a long and overcrowded office; where work was often tempered by the fellowship of friends and strangers. It only held four people when she entered, three of them young grown-ups. There was a long-limbed undergraduate, not taking life too seriously; and a rheumatic veteran, whose movements were staccato. The last replaced the kettle on an electric stove, which lay upon its back reluctantly. On a small square table a battered teapot sat like a hen brooding among some still more battered crockery. At the two desks were two harassed workers; one (as the old lady learnt) went by the name of Margaret, and meant to get things done. The other, a Napoleon seated beneath a hat-rack, was playing a species

of double dummy, with a pile of letters for his cards and rubber stamps for counters.

Pizzey—the jerky veteran—deposited the kettle, and came to welcome my long-distance relative. Where was the Vicar then? He was not far away, Pizzey informed her; in fact, he was believed to be chin-wagging with a firm of lightermen, who had constructed a new form of alms-box out of a stout old barrel. He would be back quite soon. Here Pizzey, with a taste in panaceas, suggested tea, which was waiting. The fine old lady was now ushered to a much-sat-on sofa, with folded rugs at one end of it, suggesting a spare bed in frequent use. She sat upright, her rescued reticule keeping her company, and a cracked cup—but not so cracked as others—was handed to her.

The men all saw the mud disfiguring her skirts, but did not like to mention it. Margaret had no such scruple. She guessed, and guessed the truth. So, a few moments later, the sofa was abandoned for a chair set upright before the stove, and Margaret wiped and scraped, while Pizzey stood on guard holding the office clothes-brush, with his well-drilled back towards these delicate proceedings. When I came in at last, this was the scene I saw. Pizzey need not have blushed. Great ladies of her epoch were born before the finicking period when ladies had no legs. My relative had drawn up her skirts to her old knees, and a tremendous petticoat was (*honi soit*) revealed.

She called me 'cousin' briefly, and went on to explain that she was getting old. Her sister was positively feeble. They felt the time had come for handing on some heirlooms. They had agreed that it would be appropriate that I, the only Vicar in the family, should have the Church plate for All Hallows Parish. 'Church plate,' I interjected: 'what Church did it belong to?' My family has not made

many contributions to Crockford down the ages, but I hoped at least they had not stolen chalices.

My cousin now unfolded what was to her a very recent tragedy. 'My dear, my poor great-uncle !' I was made mute by this ; I did not know his name. 'My poor great-uncle Thomas died off the coast of Spain.'

I simulated sorrow, and asked when this had happened.

'He was at sea, of course, sharing in the blockade. He was, you know, a Captain in the Royal Navy, and did well in the War.'

I still was mystified. Visions of some quaint Q boat, under a stern old salt, welled upwards in my fancy ; but I had never heard of his demise.

'When was all this ?' I asked ; and the old lady answered : 'It was some time ago—I get dates confused. But, as a girl, my parents told me to remain proud of him. It was a shock to them. Great-uncle Thomas died off the coast of Spain in 1787.'

My brain went reeling round. Here was a feat of feminine fidelity which leapt our little day, and dropped a niece's tear upon the coralled bones of one of Nelson's Captains, one of those senior men he handled with unexampled patience, himself young. Dimly across my mind there swam that jewelled sentence from Mahan, 'those battered English ships, on which Napoleon's eyes were never cast, stood between him and the domination of the world.' Here was the oldest mourner upon earth.

Outside, the traffic jarred and jammed, and then moved grinding onwards. The placards had forgotten a million vanished men, still young had they returned. A few remained who mourned them, many who mocked their prowess and slandered their sacrificial agonies. My friends were dust, asleep beneath the turf of Tyne Cot, and in a

thousand quiet gardens, with France rebuilt around them, according to their dreams. But here was one to whom France was the home of the Revolution.

Nothing like this had come my way since one remote day in Lambeth, when I had been told by some old retainer that in yonder coach-house there had stood within my informant's recollection the coach presented to Archbishop Sutton-Manners, to carry him and his to Scotland, when Bonaparte should land. Still earlier, I recalled a visit as a child to a small cottage in the Dyfferin upon the landward side of Goodwick, long before the railway had penetrated past Haverfordwest. In the downstairs room, I had been taken in 1894 to the bedside of a Welsh woman said to be of the undoubted age of one hundred and twelve. In 1797, she had been in the fields at harvest, when the French disembarked, took fright at the red hoods and high Welsh hats, mistaking them for the Foot-Guards themselves, and hurried pell-mell to sea. History does not halt. It runs right on, ignoring chapter finials, weaving into its substance the simplest shreds, as a great composer weaves in melodies, from unregarded sources. A generation's agony bores those for whom that agony was endured.

Spilt blood leaves some slight trace; but the stained sawdust is covered in a twinkling by prompt, polite attendants. The crowd round the arena resent the pause, and fan themselves with their programmes. Meanwhile, the whimpering children of that poor gladiator caught and despatched by the *Retarius* had better go back home. They will forget, the public is sympathetically certain. That is the only panacea the public ever knows. And is it true? When the children are themselves grown old, the sight of a net will wake their memory. Sorrows, after the flow of life, are bare again at the ebb. Our scars survive fresh skin.

I woke from my musing to find my cousin continuing thus :

‘My dear great-uncle Thomas, as I was saying, was a most Godfearing officer, and took with him to sea upon all occasions two Cups and Pattens for Communion. The Cups were not recovered when he died at sea, but the two plates came home with his belongings through the Navy Office.’

My eyes strayed to the site of the old Navy Office, where Pepys had worked, which could be almost seen from the Porch Room window.

‘Therefore, your cousin and I decided that the plates should be bestowed upon All Hallows-by-the-Tower ; and see ! I have them here.’

At this stage, she took up her old black reticule, and fumbled with the clasp. I own that I expected two dull late Georgian dishes, ill companions for the dignified Laudian silver-gilt which is the Church’s heirloom, bestowed by Thomas Crathorne and by Margery Covell.

My cousin had now conquered the rebellious catch on her black bag. I wanted time to think. I could not simulate appreciation, if the plates now to emerge were desperately ugly. I said at random : ‘Why two plates, do you think ? One patten was enough.’

Her answer left me speechless. ‘You may well ask that question. I asked it once myself, and was informed by my parents that in the Royal Navy at that period, the strictness of the discipline suggested that it would be fitting to have two dishes, the one for the Communion of the Officers, the other for the men.’

I was swept by a keen repulsion from these divisive dishes. I thought how they would bring this vulgar breach of brotherhood into an atmosphere, whence it had long been

driven. Lips high and low, famous and quite unknown, had drained the Laudian cups. Still more, there were now admitted into their company the Chalice and the Patten which, though of slender work, are sacred in a sense which places them apart. The Patten and the Chalice of the Upper Room at Poperinghe fed twenty thousand men, 'of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.' So runs the text graven upon the stem of that small cup of Talbot House; but the proportions are now reversed, and before long no lip which touched the cup will tarry till He come. Yet for these worshippers, of every rank and station, others are now arising who will not forget.

'Here they are,' said my cousin, handing me two silver circles of delicate craftsmanship. I gazed at them, and wondered.

'But these aren't Navy pattern. I don't know much about silver, but surely these are old.'

'I do not know their age,' explained my cousin demurely, 'I only know their melancholy story. My poor great-uncle Thomas! He died at sea, you know.'

Next day, a Colonel who runs messages was asked to take the little dishes down to the most expert silversmith in London. He was crushingly received by a junior, but humbly persevered, until he reached the man who really knew. This man received him with tired courtesy; but when he saw the dishes woke up and left his chair. After a minute observation, conducted with a glass, he said:

'It's been dull weather lately.'

The Colonel, fogged, agreed.

'Business is deadly dull.'

The Colonel was now as much at sea as great-uncle Thomas.

'But,' said the man who knew, 'it has been worth while coming to the City for a dull month, to have these brought to me. They are the workmanship of Richard Syngin, and pleasing specimens. His work is rare in England, very rare. I am happy to have seen them. I need not say, take care of them.'

They came back to All Hallows, no longer overawed by their silver-gilt neighbours, with whom they share not only their security, but the mystic privilege of being lifted up.

One further happiness is that great-uncle Thomas was by descent a Wood of Thedden Grange. The dishes, perhaps his parents' gifts to him, when he gained his first ship, hold graven on their surface the old Wood crest—a savage, armed with a club, and leaning upon a shield, which bears a noble cross. Some years ago it came to pass that the great field of India was troubled with many tares. A wise and patient husbandman needed and desired prayer. He also was a Wood; and the superb coincidence completes itself in these four steps, built in above a century. Great-uncle Thomas took the silver dishes away to sea off Spain; Pepys' office thence returned them. In her old age, his grand-niece presented them to All Hallows, where they resumed their duty in pleading for a Wood in high command.

At night, in a great building, the eye discerns only the unrelated outline of this or that portion of the fabric. The mind conjectures a harmony unevidenced until the day. Then, with the light at last, the reason for each shadow is established, and their connection is no longer a conjecture. The angels are caught at their work.

Here, then, the conclusion of the matter. I have said that Richard Syngin's patten bears the coat of arms of the Wood family, of which Lord Halifax is now the head.

When the patten first came into the keeping of All Hallows, the present Lord Halifax was then Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India during the transition. That period of crisis brought the Viceroy on more than one occasion to Calcutta. When he was there in 1928 he found the time for characteristic conduct towards Toc H, and quietly became a private member. The token of the Lamp bestowed that night upon Lord Irwin at a small gathering of ordinary members of Toc H was not forgotten. Soon after he reached home, Lord Irwin came to the Guild Church, unveiled a window, and thought out an address, delivered from a pulpit historied back to the writers of the Authorised Version. Later he stood, a dominating figure, in a light-hearted crowd in the Church garden, while that year's winner of Doggett's Coat and Badge turned on the tap which freed a home-made fountain constructed by the Lightermen and Watermen. Since then he has been busy; not too busy to undertake to lend his honoured name, and more than that, to the campaign for the Relief of Leprosy, to which Toc H has given men and means.

When last December came, Lord Halifax, then recently returned from German Conversations, was bidden by the King to read the Message of His Majesty, as Patron of Toc H, to the York Festival. Thither came ninety well-won Lamps of Maintenance—no nominal achievement on the part of units both at home and overseas. On these, by the King's order, he bestowed for the first time the Gift of Light. This being done, the whole great constellation of the North Country Lamps, already won and steadfastly maintained by Christian service from 'the elder to the younger, from the richer to the poorer, from the friendly to the lonely,' greeted this reinforcement of the Movement. Then, before Prayers dismissed the great assembly, Lord

Halifax broke silence for a space and spoke without constraint. His words went home.

That same night he became our President ; and Richard Syngin's Patten, long ago fashioned to bear its part in the innermost life of his family, and lifted up to plead in recent years for a great Viceroy's way of peace in India, goes forward to connect All Hallows Eucharist with one who leans in leadership on prayer.

TO A CLOCK.

*O master of machinery and man,
Who in thy slender hands dost seize our time
And with audacity almost sublime
Hast dared to mould our lives into thy plan,
Dividing all 'we cannot' from 'we can,'
No voice on earth so potent as thy chime.
However deep we dive, or high we climb,
Thou measurest the distance and the span.*

*Thy slaves at last have challenged thy domain.
We set thee forth or backwards at our will,
Appealing to thy greater lord the Sun.
No longer absolute is now thy reign
O'er day and night. So be content to fill
Thy proper place, until our time be done.*

F. KEELING SCOTT.

THE BELL.

BY M. A. PEART.

'I'm glad you got off on Friday,' said the Vicar. 'I wanted your opinion on Great Mobberly.'

'Didn't know it was part of your parish,' I said.

'It isn't; it's a perpetual curacy. A chap called Evans came lately. I knew his father, a sound man. But Evans has got the backs of his parish up, and given himself the jitters.'

'Why?'

'Can't say. He's Anglo-Catholic, and fussy—not a good choice after Taylor. Then the village has always bred a lot of toughs, and Evans is nervy, and used to old women. But that's all on the surface.'

We had climbed the lane through a tunnel of hedge and high-ferned banks. The Vicar pulled up at a stile. 'A good view from here,' he said.

'Gad, yes!' I gasped. The view extended to the Channel in undulating hills of timbered pasture land.

'Where every prospect pleases,' said the Vicar. 'That reminds me. Most families here are called Vile.' He lit his pipe.

'You seem a bit disgruntled.'

'I am. I am thinking of giving you up for the week-end. Something's got to be done. Evans wanted police protection.'

'Well, I'm damned,' I said.

'You'll have a most interesting time,' said the Vicar.

'Only wish I could get a locum and be there myself.'

'Why doesn't the man Evans go to his bishop, or dean, or something?'

'He did. Naturally, being of a different school, the old man dried him up. Told him it was all because he'd changed his services.'

'That's just what you think yourself.'

'Partly. But that alone wouldn't make the village so vicious. They accuse him of a kind of black magic, I gather.'

A car honked, and swung round the corner. 'In this age?' I said.

'Machines, I often think, make more scope for mischief.'

'If there's a pub handy, I'd like a drink,' I said.

'The "Plough" is the first house in the village. Run by a woman. A great place for gossip.'

We continued our walk, the Vicar sucking his pipe.

'Now that Evans will have you over the week-end I feel better about the whole thing,' he said. 'Dear me, how that wall's knocked about!' He stopped and surveyed the scattered stones of the unmortared wall, and the mangold-wurzels beyond it. 'Those deaths scared them,' he said.

'What deaths?' I asked, startled.

'Two accidental ones lately. Both men opposed Evans.'

'You don't mean to say you think——?'

'My dear chap, you've only to see him. They fell over the combe in a fog. But the village thinks it. They think he "prayed" them dead. I must say my own people show little apprehension about the results of my efforts. Well, here's the inn. Ah, good morning, Mrs. Buckley.'

A prehistoric dog, with a coat like a Highland steer, came growling from behind the bar, nuzzled the Vicar, and subsided. A stout, formidable woman relaxed her face with a smile.

'Good morning, Mr. Winter.'

'Morning, George, morning, Vile, morning, Pepper,' said the Vicar.

The atmosphere showed the usual embarrassed silence when a subject of conversation enters, but the Vicar appeared immune.

'Come and hear me Sunday fortnight, George. I'm going to preach your Harvest evening sermon.'

'And very glad we be, sir,' said the oldest ancient.

A general chorus of assent followed.

'I doesn't hold with all passons. But Mr. Winter, I says, I holds with him. He'll preach a good sermon. I holds with him and his ways. That's more than I says of some.'

The speech was approved, the atmosphere expanded, and I ordered drinks. The Vicar turned the talk to the state of the crops, the mangold-wurzels, and to the fallen wall. The atmosphere closed like a clam. The hostess, feeling it incumbent to say something, leant across the bar.

'If you'd like to see Ada's dairy certificate, sir, it's come back framed.'

'Ah, I should,' said the Vicar.

We entered the inner room, the dog wedging its way in between us. The door closed secretively. I noticed that the hand that closed it trembled.

'He's at it again, sir. Midnight last night. That's what they were saying when you came in. Which of us next? Well, he knows my feelings, and if I drop dead in the bar I don't hide 'em.'

I followed her glance through the distorting diamond panes. A little black figure with the jerky actions of a puppet came through an iron gate, crossed the road, and made for the church. The chiming of a tenor bell broke the

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silence. The woman shuddered. The dog, raising its shaggy head, fixed us with its one sound eye, threw up its muzzle, and howled. From the bar came the sound of hastily replenished glasses.

'Down, sir !' said the Vicar. The dog slunk to a corner, but continued to howl.

'This dog was Daniel's dog, sir. I took 'un in to stop Jim Moore ill-treating of him.'

'Good !' said the Vicar. 'I'm glad you did. Put him out.'

The dog, exiled to the bar, continued to howl, while the Vicar studied the new certificate. 'This certificate of Ada's is a capital thing. Capital,' he repeated, replacing his glasses in his pocket.

'That it is, sir,' said the hostess, restored to normal.

'The dog, too, is gifted. A fine musical ear. Did you notice, Hickling, a false tone in the bell ?'

I stared blankly at my friend, for I had always considered him to have no ear whatever.

'I suppose it is a new bell,' he continued. 'I shall advise Evans to have it seen to. Don't let it disturb you again, Mrs. Buckley, and don't let it distress you. We must be getting on. I want to catch him as he leaves the church. Good morning.'

We strolled down the lane. 'He's a good man, Evans,' said the Vicar, 'but I can't stand the fancy work round his neck.'

The Reverend Ozias Evans came from his churchyard gate, and stood fidgeting in the road before us, a small, spectacled puppet of a man, with twitching uneasy movements, shifting from leg to leg.

'It's no good, Winter,' he began, in a high-pitched voice. 'Look at that, and that !' He pointed to cuts and bruises

on his head and hands. 'Stones,' he said. 'Last night I was stoned, I tell you !'

'We can't talk here,' said the Vicar, rounding him towards his gate. 'I've brought Hickling along. He'll spend the night with you.' He propelled the little man to his own front door. We entered Great Mobberly Vicarage and turned into a half-furnished study.

'Would you like some hot milk?' said our host.

'No, thanks,' said the Vicar decisively. 'But if it will put some guts into you, have it.'

The Reverend Evans pushed a bell, which did not work, then jerked himself out of the room, and presently returned bearing a tray with a jug of hot milk and glasses. He poured out some for himself, and skimmed it fastidiously.

'Why did you take that midnight service?' said the Vicar.

'The Eve of St. Cyprian.'

'Ridiculous ! Don't lie, when I'm trying to help you.'

Suddenly the little man broke down. His head fell forward on his arms, his shoulders shook.

'You'll think I'm mad,' he said. 'I must speak, or I shall be. I've had no midnight mass ; I never do, save at Christmas. It's the bell. It rings of itself. I've got to go. Don't you see?' His voice rose almost to a scream. 'If they saw it ringing, ringing, as I see it, they'd say the Devil did it, that's what they'd say. It'd be the end of the Church in my parish. And something ghastly always happens, always. They come running, but I'm in first. They look through the windows. I see their heads through the glass, black against the moon. I pray, and pray, and I ring with it. Then it stops, and I come out. Last night they stoned me.'

'Well done,' said the Vicar. 'Well done. Now, my dear man, Hickling will spend the night with you. You won't be alone. You lock your church at night, of course?'

'About nine o'clock.'

'It's conceivable someone hides there. It would appeal to choirboy humour.'

'You don't believe me.'

'I do. I heard the bell just now. A most unpleasant tone. You were ringing yourself, of course.'

'Yes. Litany.'

'How did you come by it?'

'An old parishioner gave it, a good soul. Had it installed at her own expense. Nothing's wrong with the bell. It's the place, I tell you.'

'I wonder. Anything strike you as similar on the nights of those two deaths?'

'Nothing. Both nights were misty, of course—that heavy white hill-mist. I hate it. You can't see a foot before you. My sexton says there's going to be one to-night.'

'You still think they were accidents?'

He shuddered. 'In this place anything might happen. It was a mist, and they fell over the cliffs of the combe. Yet you'd have said they knew every inch of it. You heard the Coroner's summing up. I can't say much for old Moore. As hard-fisted a pagan as ever breathed, though he didn't hate me like his nephew that's come into the farm. But I got to know Daniel the shepherd when he had lumbago. I visited him. A dear old man. His dog's at the inn now. I'm glad of that. A good dog, and faithful. He used to lie on his grave.' The little man shrank back in his chair, a clockwork figure run down.

'Well,' said the Vicar, rising, 'we must go. I'll bring Hickling over after tea, and come myself to-morrow.

We'll walk back by the combe, and have a look round.
Buck up, man !'

The farm was as bleak and weather-bitten a pile of grey buildings as one could see, standing well up on the hill above the combe. We sat on the edge of the cliff and looked down on the road below, at the scene of the double tragedy. At this point a path turned off from the edge of the combe to the farm. The Vicar smoked.

'They've widened the road a good bit,' he said.

'They're widening them everywhere. Good thing too.'

'I'm not so sure.'

'Why?'

'It's certain death to fall over it now. When it was narrow there was grass, and a chance.'

I gazed down, fascinated, at the shining surface.

'Who would benefit from the deaths?' I asked.

'From the second, no one. From the first, the man who's riding towards us now. Come, I'd like you to meet him.'

A handsome, red-faced man rode down from the farm with a certain swagger. As he smiled I noticed his perfect teeth.

'Morning, Vicar. Having a look round?' he said.

'We've had hundreds here, like cattle round a dewpond. Footprints all mucked up. It was bad weather, you know.'

'Ah, so it was. I was pointing out to Mr. Hickling how the road's improved.'

He tossed back his head and laughed. 'That it has.'

'Let's see, when did they finish?'

A moment's pause. Their eyes crossed. 'Six weeks come Monday,' he said decisively.

'You'll be getting a car now you're at the farm.'

'Yes. And, more to the point, a wife, and from your parish. Phyllis Symes. I'll be coming over about the banns.'

'I congratulate you. A fine character, Phyllis. Did you say next week?'

'No, a fortnight to-night. Nine o'clock, if it suits you, Vicar. Like to look round the place?'

'Not this morning, thanks.'

'Morning, Vicar.' He set his horse at the nearest gate, and she cleared it like a swallow.

'Bravado!' said the Vicar. 'I think it is Shaw who remarks how straight a liar can stare. It's a pity you young people never read Shaw; he's most stimulating.'

'Rather Edwardian, I think. And it hardly applies to Evans.'

'Oh, Evans, good man, can't lie consciously. It was probably his first and last attempt.'

'I can't say I spot the lie.'

'When the road was finished. He put it back a week. A bad blunder.'

'I still don't see . . .'

'It's the best spot in thecombe to push your enemy over, once the road was finished—not before. And it was finished. Ever read *Othello*?'

I said rather stiffly that I had seen the play, and read it several times.

'Then you may have remarked that Iago is a bluff and hearty man. Dear me, how good women will trust a black-guard. First Isobel, now Phyllis. Isobel was Moore's first wife. Well, we shall be late for lunch.'

The four hours that night in Evans' study were the longest I have ever spent. The chairs were atrociously sprung and

padding, the fire was sullen. Supper had been a penitential meal, a make-up of Friday's fish. Evans himself drank more milk; I can see him yet jerkily skimming his glass. His talk was of missions. I should have preferred a vigil in the church, but the Vicar had extracted a promise that I would not leave him.

After supper he worked on sermon notes and read mission reports, while I read over my notes on the belfry. I had sacrificed my flannels crawling about the bell-cage. The tenor was dated 1599. The inscription, obtained after a good deal of trouble, was 'Dixi custodiam. W.K.' Its pious donor had given no new thing. Where had she found it?

'An odd inscription for a bell,' I said, breaking the silence. 'Know it?'

'Thirty-ninth psalm,' said Evans. 'About the tongue.'

'Odd sort of thing for a bell.'

'A bell's got a tongue,' he said shortly. 'And it's a good psalm.' He screwed himself into a yet more uncomfortable position. Would the man never keep still?

'Have you looked out at the night?' he said suddenly, starting up.

I let down the iron bar, and folded back the shutters. The moon had gone. We were surrounded by a wall of mist. He was standing behind me now, his fingers twitching.

'We'd better get ready,' he said. 'It was like this last time.' He went to the hall, threw a long cape over his cassock, and took the church key from a nail. Suddenly through the night came the clear ringing of the tenor bell.

'Run!' screamed Evans. He threw open the front door, and vanished in the fog. Stumbling, I followed. Luckily I had provided myself with a torch. The night was full of muffled shouts and heavy steps. I swung to

the iron gates, and crossed the lane. The churchyard gate was open. Stumbling into the porch I found Evans unlocking the door. A stone missed our heads and rattled against the ironwork. We fell down the step into the church together. He closed the door, and turned the massive key. I gave a sigh of relief; in the race for the church we had won.

'Come here and flash your light on the ropes,' he said. 'No, here where they can't see. Tell me, what d'you see, man? What d'you see?'

The tower was used as a belfry. Five ropes hung down, four knotted up as the ringers had left them. The fifth hung loose, and had a red-and-blue striped sally. It was moving upwards towards the roof. It ascended the full three-quarter circle of the wheel, the sally high above our heads, then jerked and ran down as if pulled by invisible hands. Far more terrifying than a visible ghostly presence seemed this rise and fall, pull and counter-pull, of the unaided rope.

Evans pushed me forward. 'Take it, and ring,' he said.

I blush to say that I stood like a stone. Not only do I not know how to ring, but the thought of sharing that rope with those invisible fingers froze me.

'Very well,' he said, 'I will.' He caught the descending rope, and I realised how often and under what stress of mind he had done this before.

Heavy steps ran up the path into the porch. Fists banged and rattled the door.

'Open, passon, open, or it'll be the worse for 'ee. Open there!'

He continued to ring. 'It's no effort,' he said. 'I can tell when the other fellow stops.' Beads of sweat stood out on his forehead. 'Thank God, he's stopping,' he said. The bell ceased.

'Open, passon, or we'll stone 'ee through the windows !' shouted a voice.

'I'm damned if I open,' I said.

A stone crashed through a window near. 'Open, man !' cried Evans. 'It's fourteenth-century glass.'

I took the precaution to turn the lights full on, for electricity had been lately installed. 'Put down your stones before the police come !' I shouted. 'What do you want ?' I unlocked the door.

The porch was full of malignant faces. I recognised the old man I had seen at the inn and James Moore among them.

The crowd swayed, muttering. 'Where's passon ?' they growled.

'Get home before the police come. I've warned them,' I said.

Moore pushed his way through the packed heavy bodies.

'We've no quarrel with you, Mr. Hickling,' he said. 'You're a stranger. But there's been devil's work here, and Mr. Evans is in it. We want an end on't. It gives the parish a bad name. Who rang the bell ?'

I pointed to Evans.

'We know better. You've been watched. The bell started before you left the Vicarage, passon. Who rang the bell, boys ?'

Someone shouted, 'The Devil !' The pack took up the cry like hounds. 'Aye, the devil, and he raised 'un. Passon's in league with him, he be,' piped the old man.

'You've got to go, passon. Isn't it so, lads ?' cried Moore.

'Aye, go !' A stone emphasised it.

His menacing figure confronted mine. I put up my fists.

'One minute, Moore,' said a quiet voice. 'Put down

those stones, men. These lenses are most expensive. I don't know who's to pay for all this broken glass.' My friend the Vicar had emerged from the belfry. He continued to wipe his glasses, and stowed them neatly away. 'What's all this talk about the bell? I've been here all the time. However, I am delighted to hear you have the good of your parish at heart, Moore. So have I. With Mr. Evans' consent I am trying a few experiments. Don't be alarmed if it goes off again. I shall do everything I can, of course, but probably we shall have to return it. It's very late; we'd better get home. Can you put me up, Evans? Dear me, what's that?'

Fresh shouting and convulsion in the porch as the tightly packed bodies gave way before a mass of fur and muscle. The great dog from the inn hurled himself upon the unwary farmer, and his teeth closed in his leg. The man kicked and staggered, but the dog held his grip. Cursing with rage, the farmer half turned, and brought down his heavy crop again and again.

'Stop, fool, he'll hold tighter!' cried the Vicar. Seeing man and dog were both maddened he caught the descending wrist and wrenched the crop away. Then he stooped and with his bare hands opened the dog's jaws.

'Get to the doctor, and get cauterised,' he said.

'Let me finish him!'

'Get to the doctor. There's talk of hydrophobia at the docks.'

The man's face had gone grey. 'Ought to be shot,' he said.

'I'll see to the dog. Good night, men,' said the Vicar.

'So it was you,' I said with relief as we crossed to the Vicarage.

'Did I say so? No. I want the address of the woman

who gave you that bell, Evans. Hickling must see her. You'll find my Austin under the cart-shed down the lane. Better look her over with your torch before you bring her round, Roger.'

I found him ensconced in a chair with a novel when I returned.

'Anything wrong?' he said. 'I've sent Evans to bed.'

'Yes, the nuts of the left back wheel had been loosened.'

'I have a great respect for that bell,' said the Vicar.

Miss Clara Cox's drawing-room combined some fine old furniture with a regiment of dust-catchers, and yet was a warm and cheerful room. The walls were hung with a collection of religious reproductions, alternating with views of Switzerland, the Lake District, and a strange cliff promontory on which stood a ruined church. A yellow cat stretched herself before the fire, and purred. Presently Miss Cox appeared, a little lady, kind and cheerful, leaning on a stick.

'How very nice to meet a friend of dear Father Evans!' she said. I hastened to explain that I was not of his flock, and brought up the subject of the bell.

'You bought it from the foundry, I understand, Miss Cox.'

'Oh dear no,' she said brightly, 'it was an idea of my own. You see, last Easter we went back for our holiday to dear Rockcliffe. You know it, Mr. Hickling?'

'A fashionable seaside place, I think.'

'Oh dear no. There are two Rockcliffes, the old one on the hill, and the new one in the bay, of course.' She reached down the photograph of the rocky peninsula and set it before me. 'The old church on the hill is, alas, a ruin. We always attend the new church in the town, St. Barnabas.

They're having to enlarge it again. The Rector's very hard up, and that's what gave me the idea. You see, Cecily, my niece, and I were poking about the old church, and we found the tenor bell lying unused in the tower. The bell cage had long since given way. Then I remembered how much poor Father Evans wanted a tenor bell, and I explained it all to the Rector. He was only too glad to sell it, provided it was for a religious use, of course. So I bought it, and the foundry people did the removal for me, and made the new bell cage.'

'Isn't that rather unusual? I mean, to sell the bell away from the place?'

'Oh, but you see, Mr. Hickling, the new church had had a new peal of bells given. They didn't want it. I really thought it such a good idea. And then there was something against the bell—some local prejudice, I think the Rector said.'

'You don't remember it?'

'No, I think it was just that it was an old bell, and they liked them new.'

I thanked her and, returning to my flat, wrote an account to the Vicar, and offered to run down to Rockcliffe for the week-end. He answered that it was not urgent. Things were clearing up. He would like me to come down the following Friday. Meanwhile, would I enquire about sailings to West Africa?

As so often happens, once the name of a place, however remote, has cropped up, one is bound to hear it again. On Wednesday night I was annoyingly called out of my flat in the middle of an excellent performance by the Brosa quartet. By the time my garrulous neighbour had gone I found that the quartet had finished and a talk was on of

the burrower-into-wormholes type. I was about to switch off when the name Rockcliffe stayed me.

'Few listeners,' said a clipped and careful voice, 'would associate with the modern watering-place the grim trial of 1698, known as the Rockcliffe Wreckers Trial. Winstanley's lighthouse was not then finished. Such warning as was given to shipping in fogs and gales was given by bonfires along the coast or bells, often from church towers. Some spires were truncated in order to be used as beacons for this purpose. The church of Rockcliffe on its peculiar promontory was of especial value as a beacon light in the Channel, and one of the sexton's duties was to keep a supply of wood in the tower, and toll the tenor bell in a fog.

'Needless to say, the warning, a matter of life or death to sailors, meant loss to wreckers, and there were many cases of false lights and false bells. In September, 1698, the Rockcliffe sexton's life was threatened, but the brave man continued his duties. One night of fog the wreckers, headed by a man called Leaver, had their expectations raised by the proximity of a barque, the *Flying Spray*. The sexton was caught in the belfry as he was about to ring the bell. On refusing to hold his tongue he was murdered and thrown over the cliff. Misled by a false bell used by the wreckers the *Flying Spray* struck the rocks, and such survivors as reached the shore met the sexton's fate.

'Justice was brought home through the persistence of the sexton's dog and the one survivor from the wreck. The dog's persistence in attacking Leaver and the sailor's plight appealed to the better natures in the village, and the hostess of the inn turned Queen's evidence against her brother. It was the story of the Rockcliffe trial that determined Winstanley——'

I switched off, and sent my notes of the talk to the Vicar.

He thanked me, and sent a cheque for a second-class passage on the *Myona* and a ticket from the local junction to London. He expected me on Friday, he said.

The Vicar's study is a comfortable book-lined room with mullioned windows. So here, I thought, glancing round it, the hunt will end. The Vicar arranged papers, pens, a book, and an envelope on the table before him, then opened a door of an inner closet or cupboard containing an old chest and the parish registers.

'You brought your revolver?' he said.

I nodded.

'I am a man of peace, but to-night it may be necessary. Cover Moore from the moment he enters, and watch him. You will see clearly through the perforated zinc. Now we must wait. I'm sorry I can't suggest your smoking.' He closed the door.

A bell pealed. I heard a dog bark violently. The maid opened the front door, and I heard her ascending the stairs, followed by a man.

'Mr. Moore to see you, sir.'

'Ah, come in,' said the Vicar. 'Take a seat, Moore.'

He dropped easily into a chair, and from my post I could not but admire his splendid physique. The Vicar opened the banns book. The servant descended the stairs.

'Full particulars here, Vicar,' said Moore, pushing over a paper.

The maid had reached the kitchen and closed the double doors. The Vicar closed the book.

'Will you open that envelope, Moore? There is a passage to West Africa and your ticket to London. Your ship sails to-morrow.'

'What do you mean, you fox?'

'Don't draw. Mr. Hickling is behind you. You will write me a cheque for the amount of the passage and ticket, and sign this paper clearing Mr. Evans of all knowledge of the murders of your uncle and the shepherd Daniel, and of all the other malpractices of which you have accused him. Read, and sign. I say nothing of your attempts on myself.'

The man laughed. 'You'll have your time cut out bringing all those birds to roost. You heard the coroner.'

'Exactly. That is why I have booked your passage. Mr. Evans' extensive knowledge of missions enabled me to find a suitable spot. I suggest a trading job. The tribes in this territory have so far resisted missionary effort. Their physique equals yours, and their sense of justice is crude but prompt.'

'D'you think I'm a fool, now I've the farm and Phyllis?'

'You will go because of Phyllis—and Mr. Evans. Your brother can take over the farm. If you refuse I hold this'—he opened another paper—'the dying statement of your first wife, Isobel Moore, witnessed and held by me for fourteen years. The original is at my bank with my instructions.'

'A parson's honour!' sneered the man.

'Exactly. It would have remained there had not these and other lives been in danger. Strange as it seems, your wife, Isobel Manners, loved you, and held her peace. A certain blow you gave her killed both her and your child. If you remain, I shall hand this to her brothers.'

'You devil!'

The Vicar appeared by no means displeased at this. 'Not at all,' he said, 'not at all. There is ample time for you to pack and catch the night mail at the junction. Will you sign?'

The man drew the paper towards him, read, cursed, and

signed. He rose to go, towering above us. 'You've trapped me for now,' he said, 'but one day, Parson Winter, I'll return, and then——'

'Ah,' said the Vicar, 'threatened men live long. Good night, Moore.'

We heard his steps descend the stairs. The heavy front door closed, his feet crunched the gravel, the gate swung to.

'I think we may have a well-earned smoke,' said the Vicar.

'What do you make of it all?' I asked, when we were seated before the fire.

'It has long been a theory of mine that a cycle of events tends to repeat itself,' he said. 'Given the key, the conditions here this fall were much the same as those in Rockcliffe in September 1698. Then Evans imported the bell. I had long had my eye on James Moore. His mother was a Leaver. Yes, the family migrated to this parish about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Good stock in the main, but apt to throw up a violent shoot. Registers are sometimes a record of family character, Roger. As you now know, I knew the cause of his first wife's death. I was not wholly unprepared for the sudden death of his uncle. Still, old Moore was a heavy drinker; it might have been accidental. But the death of Daniel shook me.'

'You think he witnessed the murder?'

'Perhaps witnessed, more likely suspected. He was an excellent tracker. I at once realised other lives would be endangered—Evans and the dog.'

'Why Evans?'

'He had visited old Daniel when he was ill precisely at this period. Moore must have suspected that some confidence had passed between them. He wished to get rid of Evans, and the dog.'

'You think he used the bell?'

'Ah, there you jump too far. No, that is the interesting point: the bell rang of itself. Think back to the previous cycle. A brave man violently cut off, his will set on ringing that bell at all costs. Again cliffs, again fog, again a violent man—a Leaver—plotting. Even the dog. "Justice was brought home through the persistence of the dog."

'It went against the grain to let him go. But I had not sufficient evidence, and the police had failed to get it.'

He smoked for a time in silence, brooding. There came a knock at the door.

'I've shut all up for the night, sir.'

'Good night, Mary.' She still waited. 'What is it?'

'Todd's out, sir. Todd, Daniel's dog.'

'What?'

'He slipped his chain, sir. He bolted when I opened the wash-house door.'

'Hickling,' cried the Vicar, 'get out the car. Run, man! We may catch them yet. Did Mr. Moore walk?'

'Yes, he comed by the coombe, sir, I reckon by his boots. He allus do unless he rides.'

'There's just a chance,' said the Vicar.

As I brought round the car he and the maid swung open the big gates. He swung himself in.

'There's a path up the side of the combe from the forge. We may cut them off there.'

Letting all out, I drove through the village and round the wood. Leaving the car by the forge, we climbed the steps up the cliff by flashlight to the path along the top.

'They've both passed,' said the Vicar, glancing at the ground. 'Run on, man. No, wait; he's dangerous. I'm coming.'

The moon sailed out from behind her ragged clouds.

The bleak, moor-like top of the combe was empty. We reached the bend where the path to the farm diverged, the spot where we had sat together in the sunshine, and I had first seen Moore.

'Look !' said the Vicar, grasping my arm. 'Look down !' He led me to the precipitous edge. 'Look, look !'

Spreadeagled below on the metalled surface of the road lay the unmistakable figure of the man. A mass of fur lay across him. Both lay still.

'Dead !' whispered the Vicar. 'Both dead. The dog too. The same place. Justice.'

The wheel had come full circle.

It was some weeks before my friend, when he wrote, referred to Great Mobberly, though I had asked several times what had been done with the bell. At last I received a card.

'Evans and I persuaded the Rector of Rockcliffe to take it back. Miss Cox kindly bore the expense. There is an efficient lighthouse, and I don't suppose it will ring again. The Rector at first raised difficulties. I pointed out that he had sold it without a faculty.'

GIANTS AND MONSTERS.

BY C. E. LAWRENCE.

NATURE abhors the eccentric, and when the abnormal occurs appears to ignore it. What she must think of the distortions to which some of her creatures in our civilised conditions have been put is more than we can say.

Men of science tell us that if the whole tribe of specialised pigeons—the fantails, tumblers, pouters—were left to breed uncontrolled, or as their columbine hearts determined, their descendants would lose the eccentricities that mark the divisions of the species and eventually revert to a similarity with the common rock-dove, their original progenitor. Treat dogs in the same manner and back they would go to the grey wolf; though doubtless it would take many careless generations to dis-breed the peculiar characteristics of greyhounds and bloodhounds, pugs, dalmatians, chows, spaniels and pekes. Yet, restore her own to Nature, let mongrel mate with mongrel, without care for the consequences, and in a century or two the dog would have returned to his origins—and doubtless be utterly detestable, useless as a companion, too treacherous to be a pet, a dishonest guardian, sneaking and cowardly except when driven desperate by hunger.

When it comes to Humanity the same conditions apply, though only through the interests of caste has any sort of system in breeding been attempted with mankind, and that through the concerns of 'Family,' of 'Blood'—generally inbred, but also and often through considerations of Money as well. Even the Eugenists who look with serious eyes

at the super-intelligentsia in the hope of their producing offspring of the best quality by having them mate with the class wherein culture and prosperity are combined, seem to have done no more than generally urge uncertain theories and publish statistics. But while *l'homme propose*, the Love-god in his mischief too frequently disposes. The Professor argues and pleads ; but indifferent to the 'isms and 'ologies and blinding his eyes with his own roseate wings Cupid goes on in his haphazard fashion ; and so it comes that sometimes freaks occur to mankind, as also genius may occur. Dwarfs and giants, or at least persons a little too small or too large, are born, to become, through their difference from the general standards of height and bulk, noticeable, and, on the whole, it is to be feared, for that reason, often unhappy.

Did ever a giant exist—meaning a real, live, colossal and preposterous man-monster and not a mere nightmare of fable ? We are tempted to say No ; but that would be too heartless a word to come in an essay as soon as this. Anak, that biblical wonder and distant offspring of the sons of God who mated with the daughters of men ; what really were his dimensions, and did he truly father a gigantic brood ? We have it on scriptural authority that he did so ; but may it not be that as with the lengths of years the earliest patriarchs are said to have lived—Adam, 930 ; Jared, 962 ; Methusaleh, 969—the writer of Genesis worked by other measures than those we have known ? Anyhow, he probably was no arithmetician. It is asserted, however, that the ancient Egyptians, with whom Moses, as the Book tells us, was closely allied, counted every lunar month as a year. If that were so, then the problem is solved. Methusaleh was really less than seventy-five years old when he died, and not so marvellous after all. It is likely, therefore,

that, through a similar cause, the measures of human height and girth were different from those that are conventional to us.

Another cause of disturbance comes from the uncertainties of travellers. When the faint-hearted Israelites, who with Caleb explored the Promised Land before the entry of the rest of their people, reported, 'And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants : and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight,' they probably were merely as mistaken as were the earliest English adventurers to the American Indies who saw there

*'men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders.'*

At worst we may believe those travellers were guilty of honest exaggerations due to fear rather than a desire to tell tall tales, though evidently it is easy under the emotion of a new experience to extend the phenomenal by inches or even at times by a cubit or two.

If the Anakim really were giants, where are the remains of those monsters whose tribal freedom Joshua destroyed? Goliath too, so easily extinguished through a stone from a shepherd's sling, did he leave nothing behind him but a name? No over-large little ones?

Not that, on second thoughts, this is much to go by; for in prehistoric times there certainly were huge creatures on the earth, mammoths and mastodons, pterodactyls, dinosaurs with their sisters and their cousins and their aunts; while even now there are elephants, rhinoceri, hippopotami, crocodiles, ostriches and whales big as houses—as nobody can deny! So that if prehistoric animals were often colossal, why not also the men and women engendered when the world was young and, like many other young things, apt

to exaggerate? The circumstance that no remains of a giant have been discovered means almost nothing. His bones and skin at their toughest cannot have been as enduring as a dragon's scaly hide or the massive bone-structure of a mammoth, such as we know have been preserved as fossils and otherwise among the rocks or in the swamps that cloaked the Earth before it developed a crust solid enough to bear pyramids and sky-scrappers.

This is a case where facts have been forced to bend before imagination and rhetoric; and no amount of calm reasoning will disestablish the Titans who, in the legendary æons when even Cronus was a youth, hurled boulders in the pride of their strength, easily uprooted trees and with the playful movement of a foot sent avalanches crashing down the mountain-sides to come to eternal silence in the valleys. And as those Titans wrought, building the Giant's Causeway in Ireland, and (as tradition as late as the Tudors declared) bringing Stonehenge from Africa in a single night, so, too, they fought each other, or hunted the mighty creatures of the wild, or played their boisterous games with a will; while their shouts and laughter, echoing among the hills, brought terror to the scattering of mankind cowering in their wretched wattle shelters. Through such influences the fear of the gods—awe of those giant ones—was born, and the lightning-flashes and thunder-bolts, in their loud mystery terrible, caused the souls of men to think and make conjecture as well as tremble.

But while such violent convulsions inspired the thought of divine wrath, so the warming, invigorating sun and the placid light of the silver moon were equally accepted as witnesses to God's everlasting mercy, benevolence and peace. It is inevitable for Mankind to give the powers, whether of Heaven or of Nature, an anthropomorphic guise, and

in places where the forces of existence appear the most formidable, as among the mountains, fjords and valleys of the Norse, so the aspects of those forces appeared to visionary eyes as supermen, giants; to become in the slow courses of time such as Woden, Balder, Frey and his sister, Freya, that intolerable virgin whose cradle was the snows, and Thor, with his hammer, before which even the iron hills were dissolved to dust, but who yet was simple enough to be duped by Loki into attempting to drink dry the sea. Those were hearty giants, demi-gods with a humour too oppressive, perhaps, for full appreciation by feeble and defenceless mankind, yet capable of bringing their awful mirthfulness to regions where only themselves could persist.

Polyphemus, Hyperion, with others like them, belonged to less boisterous branches of the same titanic family. As to Polyphemus, even Homer failed to make him colossal in spirit, although he described him as not like a mortal but like a mountain-peak crowned with trees. Happily Homer was not often so vague as that. Yet the monster was too bestial for greatness, being in his cruelty a mere ogre though of swollen dimensions, with only a poor mind and petty cunning that were fitly met by the equally simple artifice of Ulysses. But while in the *Odyssey* Polyphemus was just an extraordinary brute, Turner, in his painting in the London National Gallery of Ulysses deriding him, shows him as wrought of the texture of the clouds and dwelling half-way between the world and heaven, making all things underneath him, even with their beauty and heroism, trivial. The painter in that incident was the greater poet.

With Keats's Hyperion, and especially his Saturn, whose sorrow in loneliness the poet has depicted with glowing

imaginative greatness, we meet others whose measures outdo those of men, as Thea,

*' a Goddess of the infant world,
By her in stature the tall Amazon
Had stood a pigmy's height ;'*

yet those Titans are human only in their pride, resentment against injustice, and despair.

And it is lovely in this close connection with the titanic, as it illustrates the delicate wonder of Shakespeare's genius for humour, that he should have named his infinitesimal Queen of the Fairies, that minutest of immortals—Titania. Those wide extremes, the Titans and she—who without being very much squeezed might have ridden by the side of Queen Mab in the hazel-nut shell, her chariot !

Through these super-folk—and she is of the super-folk too—we descend to the super-heroes, men to whom legends have given especial powers and added girth and height, whose tombs are often the nameless barrows of Wilts and Dorset, and who now are only to be recalled by their bare names, as Lud and Leir, the latter of whom, however, is our familiar King Lear, reclothed by Shakespeare and restored to human dimensions and weaknesses. The legendary Guy of Warwick, who slew a dragon in Northumbria as well as the Danish giant Colbrand, also possibly was one of them ; but his record is so distorted through romantic absurdities that even the existence of Guy's Cliffe in Warwickshire makes him less real than any.

It may be that Gog and Magog, whose large brightly painted wooden effigies in the music-gallery of the London Guildhall give enjoyment to aldermen and children, were of their following ; non-commissioned officers, we may suppose, in the armies of lost British chieftains—they look

so like company-sergeant-majors of a less-efficient age, dressed for pantomime. Harrison Ainsworth in his unhistorical romance, *The Tower of London*, made them yeomen-warders of that fortress in the time of the Tudors and added unto them a third, Og, a namesake of the King of Bashan. Their names were borrowed from the Bible, their effects were futile. In no way in the romance were they giants at all ; but, at best, only lesser or larger Falstaffs, witless and humourless.

Having drifted to the regions of pantomime and what is called imaginative literature, it may be well to continue therein for a time and find the giants who, while in works of genius they were better than aspects of a joke, were merely ridiculous in most efforts of fiction and almost entirely so on the theatrical stage. To begin with them and gradually rise to the sublime is our natural course and shall be followed—yes, truly to the sublime, for we shall end this division of our subject with the Miltonic Satan who was of that genius, gigantic in his structure as in his ambition, powers of hatred and pride, and still unsubdued though suffering enforced humiliations, worse to him than the pain of the burning marl to whose ever-scorching surface the poet and the angels of God had cast him, 'flaming from the ethereal sky.'

So back we go, meanwhile, to Fee-Faw-Fum who represents all the giants of Pantomime, that otherwise are nameless—as of him whose beanstalk Jack climbed, and of him who was killed in the shape of a mouse by that servant and mentor of my Lord Marquis of Carabas, Puss in Boots. Such figures, like other talking animals and the Guildhall Gog and Magog, may be relics of ancient folk-faith, if not of folk-lore, and for want of records, combined with the illiteracy of the people, forgotten ; but in the darker ages, doubtless, often talked of by those old children who were

terrified or uncertainly amused by them and their clumsy, threatening antics.

Generally in pantomime they are separate—'Voices Off'—and unseen, for it would cost too much to stuff and make them movable, though at Drury Lane, where they can do all sorts of impossible things and spend fortunes in the sacred names of Entertainment and Nonsense, representations of giants have been seen, as at the time of the second Boer War, when the figure of a giant Kruger would have been shown sprawled in defeat on that famous stage, if it had not been that the actual Kruger happened just then to be tiresomely alive and kicking. Sometimes in pantomime creatures called giants appear and march stiffly, stumpily, to the compelling music of Herman Finck; but they are misnamed when called gigantic, being too evidently men and women on stilts who represent the grotesqueness without the bodily fullness of acceptable gianthood.

Because Pantomime has enslaved some of the Arabian Nights and brought Sinbad the Sailor, with other Eastern adventurers amid azure seas, golden mountains and glittering or gloomy caves of magic, to stages whereon their mothers have generally proved curiously Cockney and comic, we may as well discover what giants or persons of colossal stature appeared in the tales with which Scheherazade consoled the sleeplessness of her King but find that no mere man-mountain or Quinbus Flestrin was there. Instead we have colossal Djins, spirits of terror and obedience, slaves to lamps and rings and abracadabra—and not a great many of them. But two stand out. The first is the Afrit released by the Fisherman from the Brass Bottle (with which Mr. Anstey made good farcical play); and here is how Lane of the 'Thousand-and-One Nights' described that monster, after the released smoke from out of which

the Afrit emerged had condensed and then had grown agitated. His 'head was in the clouds, while his feet rested upon the ground : his head was like a dome : his hands were like winnowing forks ; and his legs, like masts : his mouth resembled a cavern : his teeth were like stones ; his nostrils, like trumpets ; and his eyes, like lamps ; and he had dishevelled and dust-coloured hair.' More than colossal, and more than confusing and but little impressive.

Sinbad and his companions also had their Djinn who came out of the upper air, 'a person of enormous size, in human form, and he was of black complexion, of lofty stature, like a great palm-tree : he had two eyes like two blazes of fire, and tusks like the tusks of swine, and a mouth of prodigious size, like the mouth of a well, and lips like the lips of the camel, hanging down upon his bosom, and he had ears like two mortars, hanging down upon his shoulders, and the nails of his hands were like the claws of the lion.' So fearsome and ferocious is he that he transcends the bounds of ferocity and all the fears, and any attempt to put him on a London stage would be as amusing as some of the dragons with which we have seen Siegfried battle, in which encounter the audience remained so polite to the genius of Wagner that no one for a moment could have suspected that the flabby bogy really only amused them.

That Sinbad's testimony to the anthropophagic Djinn must be taken as of authority is shown by his further witness to the existence of that marvellous great bird, the roc, beside which the largest of our prehistoric monsters would be a mere domesticated sheep. Not only he but his companions also mistook the roc's egg for a white dome and afterwards had their ship's steering shattered by huge masses of stone dropped on them in revenge by the parents because they had carelessly slain their innocent great chick.

Pantomime has not been the only stage-form in which the giant—so termed in the jargon of such freak-shows as Phineas T. Barnum organised, with his Tom Thumbs, living skeletons, bearded ladies, pigs with two heads or five feet, and other uncharming attractions for the delectation and pence of the not-too-nobly curious—appeared, as Sir Arthur Pinero wrote a comedy, *The Freaks*, in which a minor character was the giant from a travelling show received into a private house. The play was not of its author's best, while his device of causing his freak to fall in love with the daughter of his host did not quite touch the heart. The association suggested was a little unpleasant. Yet I cannot forget the dark mournfulness of that giant's eyes, hopeless under repudiation. It was the most memorable circumstance of the play, and brought home the hardly necessary moral of the handicaps suffered by human freaks, who, born with the passions of mankind, may find that conditions prevent their enjoying their natural rights to happiness. It seems also that the overgrown have an added infirmity; that the energies which should stimulate their minds must be used instead to keep up the vitalising fires of the body, so that generally they are slow in the uptake, stupid.

So for the Stage; and now for Fiction. In his novel, *The Food of the Gods*, Mr. Wells made an endeavour to justify the breeding, or purposed development, of a giant human race. A food was invented for the special growth of the chosen in mankind. Through a carelessness, likely to happen in ordinary life and bound to occur in a novel, other things beside the men and women for whom the food was intended ate of it, and giant rats and wasps, as large as those which harassed Lemuel Gulliver—his rats being the size of mastiffs and his wasps of partridges—were developed to endanger human safety and Mr. Wells's plot. The

pests were overcome and in the course of not too long a time super-men and women, giants beautiful, beneficent and with their wits well about them, peopled England. Yet what in the end was the use of all that? So far as I recall the tale, the new giants were only unlike ourselves in being much larger. They added nothing to the spiritual or other wealth of life; and if the only result of their existence was to occupy more space—then Why?

The reference to Gulliver transports us to Brobdingnag, that was, he tells us—and surely still must be—somewhere beyond the Straits of Madagascar. There the giants needed no Wellsian food to make them oppressive to normal humanity. In Swift's realistic imagination the unpleasantnesses of the flesh exaggerated were so surely seen that now and then the frankness made one falter and recognise the inconveniences of mere bulk; but, as with Gulliver and the Lilliputians, it is through his physical contrast with theirs that amusement is caused; almost the only amusement in a book which through the popular misunderstanding of the author's intention has been taken as humorous and for children, whereas in its purposes *Gulliver's Travels* had something of the bitterness of a libellous eighteenth-century political pamphlet.

It is different with the giant-tribe of Rabelais' boisterous invention; for Gargantua, who begat Pantagruel at the age of 444, with the others of his monstrous clan were of a largeness and grossness far above the ordinary who served them. Gargantua did his hair with a comb nine hundred feet long, 'whereof the teeth were great tusks of elephants.' Such vastness is only oppressive. Why Rabelais needed those major-monstrosities is now not clear; and so much of the significance of the satirical romance has gone, through the points of the allusions being lost, that

its author is one of the least comprehensible of those whose works are preserved on the shelves of greatness.

On the other hand, John Bunyan's allegorical monsters have reality because of his simple sincerity ; and although his Slaygood and the more elaborate Giant Despair of *Castle Doubting* play but story-book rôles in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, with a religious moral waiting for application after every incident, they are just the conventional gross brutes who act according to the rules that govern ogres in fairy-tales, and possess dungeons, cruelties and appetites consonant with the traditions of the crudely grotesque.

We return at length to that most sublime of imaginative figures—Satan, Milton's conception of whom outdoes even that of Dante, who depicts him in the *Inferno*, as colossal, defeated and finally fallen, thrown, to the frozen centre of the Earth, that ultimate base of hopelessness and the very pit of Hell ; while in *Paradise Lost* he is shown as not untriumphant, though suffering the bad eminence of leadership in disaster among the eternal fires. The greatness of the Miltonic Satan is, of course, merely an expression of the poet's own grandeur of vision, thought and utterance. But while all that is easily true, Milton, unfortunately, was not content to leave his vast conception sufficiently to the imagination ; and, as Swift did playfully and therefore not unconvincingly with the Brobdingnagians and Lilliputians, he used details in describing Satan's mere bulk that tended to belittle him through bringing him too precisely into the system of measures that are normally used by men. His shield was like the moon, his spear as tall as a ship's mast, 'his bulk of monstrous size, Titanian.'

All the passages wherein Satan appears are fine, and often magnificent, poetry ; but such comparisons suggest that he was merely to be classed with the Colossus of Rhodes,

material and not wearing the awful glory of the archangels, enshrouded with intolerable brilliance, and so reveals a weakness in the poet which also allowed us to overhear the Very Highest, even God and Christ, in discussion, thereby disclosing in them not so much an eloquence divine as the laboured insistencies of Puritan advocates at a benevolent religious conference.

Yet in the minds of our credulous forbears Satan was not only an omnipresent influence, tempting men, deceiving and destroying them, through tricking them into indulging lusts that poisoned their souls ; but also was vindictive and forceful in his passions, venting them in crude violence on the hills, so that such considerable facts as the Devil's Dyke and Punch-bowl exist to show the havoc he could wreak in his ungentlemanly transports.

Moral greatness or heroism—nay, sometimes even the widely admired—were almost bound in any credulous age to be translated into the terms of physical largeness. An easy fault ; an ever-available tendency and weakness, as Carlyle disclosed in his *Heroes and Hero Worship* and as, in their ordinary spheres, many gardeners or newspaper-correspondents talkatively illustrate with their giant gooseberries, and some anglers with their newly or nearly caught fish which surely belong to the far-distant progeny of the Great Leviathan.

As to our conclusion—with such moral as you please ; we now can ask again and are able to answer our earlier question, Was there ever truly a giant on the Earth, and not a mere exaggerated man after the character of the chosen—or kidnapped—seven-foot guardsmen of Frederick the Great's father or the nine-foot-nine Garbara of ancient Rome, vouched for by the Elder Pliny ?

Fables are simply made and as frequent deceivers as dreams. They may grow as Porthos, that big one of the thrusting Musketeers of Dumas, grew in bulk and glamour as his creator's fond admiration of him increased under the spell of further contemplation and an ever-alert inversion. Most men are ready to drift into accepting the incredulous and even wilfully to mislead themselves while they are able easily to make mistakes—as once a verger did when, on going to a lady in church and asking her not to stand on the hassock, he discovered to their mutual embarrassment that she was only over-tall. No. As Betsy Prig in a fevered, ungrateful moment declared of Mrs. Harris, so we of the super-gigantic Giants? We don't believe there was no such persons—but yet with all that we hope they will continue to roar and trample through the story-books and pantomimes, and flourish there for years and years and years, as they are almost as necessary as fairies.

THE FORTUNATE DISASTER.

BY C. T. STONEHAM.

ONLY Bryan Forbes knew the true story of Tracey's disgrace, and he forbore to repeat such an improbable tale. The man, a visitor to Kenya from Johannesburg, where he was a prosperous and respected physician, was convicted of a ferocious attack on a native and deported from the Colony.

It began with Tracey looking out of his bedroom window the fourth morning of his visit and seeing something entrancing. Forbes' house was built of stone, the only two-story building in that part. From the upper window the guest looked out on lawn and rose garden and a large orchard. Beyond this was an expanse of grass leading to the forest, dark green and dense. In the clean early sunlight Tracey saw a large antelope come from the forest to the wire fence of the orchard. It was a bull kudu, mature and splendid in shining rufous hide and huge spiral horns.

It was Tracey's first sight of one of these wilderness aristocrats, and he watched enthralled. At the fence the animal knelt, thrust his nose under the wire and skilfully insinuated himself. The slack wire bumped along the curves of his laid-back horns, he slid forward and rose within man's stronghold. With haughty composure he walked to an apple-tree laden with fruit and with his horns angled for a branch. This, entangled in those wide loops, he pulled down until it broke and hung within easy reach. Then he proceeded to eat apples with leisurely enjoyment.

Tracey threw on his coat and ran downstairs to the dining-room. 'Where are you, Forbes?' he cried. As

his host emerged from his study he demanded a rifle. 'There is a marvellous kudu eating your apples. If I go quickly I shall get him.'

Forbes, elderly and bespectacled, shook his head, smiling. 'Malu again ! He is a frequent visitor and an incorrigible thief. But you won't surprise him ; he is a very clever fellow.'

Tracey was impatient. 'He's there now. I'll get him.'

Forbes re-entered his room and brought a .256 Mannlicher and a clip of cartridges. In a few minutes Tracey was stealing across the dew-wet lawn, intent on slaughter.

But Malu had gone ; there was no trace of him save that broken branch which he had stripped of fruit. Tracey was astonished that the animal had effaced itself so quickly. He crossed to the forest and peered into its tangled depths, but did not discover the robber.

The kudu stood in a dense thicket on the fringe of the forest and watched the hunter. There were no dogs to be seen, and Malu knew himself safe. He had played hide-and-seek with men often enough and his respect for their capabilities had waned. Apparently, they could discover nothing by smell ; a good screen of leaves was sufficient protection from them.

Tracey returned to breakfast filled with a new enthusiasm. That day he had intended to fish ; now his plans were changed. The sight of those huge spiral horns had awakened a rabid desire ; he had the trophy-mania in all its restless virulence.

At breakfast he questioned his host about the kudu.

'He has stolen my fruit and vegetables for the past two years,' Forbes informed him. 'Only at the mating season does he absent himself. One or two of my guests have hunted him, but they tell me he is very cunning, up to all

the tricks. Before my dogs died they used to chase him. I don't know what happened after they vanished into the forest, but evidently he had means to escape them, for he came back to steal again every week or so.'

Tracey knew his friend was no sportsman. Forbes seemed interested only in husbandry, and the acclimatising of exotic trees which he obtained as seedlings from every quarter of the globe. His correspondence on this subject was voluminous; he spent half his time with books and a typewriter, the other half inspecting his nurseries and plantations.

'You don't seem to mind the buck helping himself to your produce.'

'He leaves more than enough for my needs,' Forbes smiled. 'So long as he leaves my trees alone he is welcome to his perquisites.'

'Well, I want to get a shot at him. You don't object?'

'Not in the least, my dear chap. Amuse yourself as you please. If you intend to hunt Malu I will give you a boy as guide, otherwise you will get lost in the forest.'

The promised guide materialised as a scrawny, sullen Kamba named M'lefu. He presented himself clad in a cotton blanket stiff with dirt, and clumsy ox-hide sandals. His hair was plaited with clay in imitation of a Masai moran, and he carried a long-bladed spear. He had worked for a missionary and spoke a sort of English, but he spoke seldom, being the most taciturn individual Tracey had ever encountered.

'Meat is their delight,' Forbes explained. 'M'lefu will do his best to help you shoot the kudu.'

Tracey found the Kamba's best not good enough. With his borrowed rifle and a pocketful of cartridges he set out behind the oaf, who led him into the forest on trails where

no spoor of kudu was discernible. The tyro was impatient, quick action was his need. He stirred his phlegmatic guide to speed and followed the trails at a purposeful three miles an hour, expecting at every moment to flush the quarry. At meal-times he returned tired and disgruntled, asserting that the surrounding forest was empty of everything larger than a dik-dik. Forbes, as ignorant as himself, could not advise him; M'lefu would say nothing but 'No good,' accompanied by an exasperating bovine stare. The native was doing the work for which he was paid; its outcome did not concern him. Like all his kind, he had no hope of success until he should see it within his grasp.

At the end of a week Tracey would have abandoned his efforts in boredom but that he found new evidence of Malu's depredations in the orchard. The kudu must lurk near: the trophy-hunter should not be discouraged. The length of the chase would enhance the value of the prize.

For days Tracey stalked up to the orchard at dawn and dusk, but without a glimpse of Malu. Then in his host's library he found a book on African hunting. Half the night he read it, and his eyes were opened to a new world.

The next morning he dismissed the dreary Kamba and took his way into the forest alone. Among the bushes he moved very slowly, pausing often to look and listen. It was dry-forest, having no trees bigger than acacia and red-thorn. Bushes of many varieties rioted in the sandy soil, there were numerous glades of thick green grass, and streams descended from the mountain range to the west. Deep ravines filled with rocks and bushes made progress toilsome, but Tracey knew now that these were favourite hiding-places for the game and he no longer found them unin-

teresting. He tried to make each turn of the trail a threshold of discovery ; he pondered and conjectured, noting each sign of displaced leaf or trampled dust, the behaviour of birds, furtive and nervous in the undergrowth. The rattle of doves' wings, the croaking of hornbills, began to have meaning for him.

He saw a troop of Sykes' monkeys playing on the ground, and was able to circumvent them unsuspected. He found a wild pig drinking at a stream, watched by a supercilious heron. A pair of dik-dik made love in a glade within five yards of a basking python. And then—wonderful experience !—he came upon a big sleek leopard crouched on a fallen log staring with amber eyes at a herd of impala grazing beyond the stream. For some time he studied this, hoping to see Chui at his hunting, and learnt that wild animals have a sense of being watched, so that impala suspected leopard and leopard suspected man.

Shortly after that, to his astonishment, it was dusk, and he must return to the farm, terminating a day of absorbing interest and pleasure.

For the next two weeks Tracey spent every daylight hour in the forest. He became lean and brown, clear-eyed and thoughtful. His movements insensibly slowed ; he grew unaware of haste, had boundless leisure and no anxieties. No disturbance ruffled the increasing calmness of his temperament, which had once been nervous with the pressure of affairs.

Forbes seemed oblivious of the passing of time ; his friend was content and might stay with him for months. Once, he enquired of the progress of the hunt.

Tracey confessed that he had not seen the kudu. ' Buffalo, a rhino, any amount of waterbuck and impala—and some eland—but no kudu.'

'Bless my soul, I didn't know we had all that stuff so close to the farm !' exclaimed Forbes. 'But you have shot nothing.'

Tracey acknowledged, with surprise at the realisation, that he had fired the rifle only to kill a poisonous snake. He was made ashamed by Forbes' mirth.

'Stigand says you should hunt the selected beast irrespective of all others,' he defended himself.

But that night, smoking solitary in the moonlight, he considered that Malu's head had ceased to beckon. The pursuit of the big kudu had become an excuse for loafing through the bush, probing, learning, wondering, in a world of strange facts, where to be alive was all-sufficing, where obligation had no meaning. He reviewed the business of his profession with astonishment. It seemed meaningless fuss and bother, that old life. He could not delude himself he was necessary : there were too many doctors, all scrambling for a livelihood, and more qualifying every year. Much nicer to loaf and bask and watch the beasts that perish. It suddenly occurred to him that whatever gods might be would surely dwell in the place of their handiwork, afar from bricks and mortar, mechanical noises and artificial lighting. The prospect of dividing his days between stuffy surgery and patients' sick-rooms filled him with disgust.

Plans formed in his mind. He would sell out, come up here and buy a farm, like Bryan Forbes. It would be difficult, of course : family, friends, obligations of all kinds, would combine to stop him. However, there was no need for hurry ; in this place hurry was unknown.

Acquiring the habit of reticence from his peculiar recreation, he said nothing about his change of heart. Only he followed his wilderness trails assiduously, with greater con-

centration, feeling there must be an end to his liberty. He was rewarded by a distant view of Malu. One evening he stood on the brink of a wide ravine into which a herd of eland had vanished. He was waiting for them to emerge on the farther bank, and had his binoculars focussed on a peaceful glade lit by the setting sun.

It was the magnificent kudu that appeared, walking with serene dignity into the field of vision. He stood in the midst of the glade looking about him, a wonderful picture of vital grace.

To Tracey this animal personified the freedom and beauty of the wilderness ; he seemed the forest's darling child. But in the heart of him stirred that excited covetousness again, those sweeping spiral horns were like gold to a miser. After all, this was the purpose of his daily excursions, to get Malu. Between these two was war, it had been declared at first sight.

The bull was three hundred yards away and Tracey distrusted his marksmanship. He descended into the shelter of the ravine and began to stalk.

The buck no longer in view, he had doubts. It seemed unnecessarily destructive to shoot the creature ; in this vacillation of purpose he really could not decide if he were a true hunter. Reason fortified him. What was the sense of spooring and trailing, meandering all day through hot dry bush, hiding in fly-infested dongas, if not to achieve some definite accomplishment ? His training had been to consider dalliance waste, every endeavour should have its goal. He must shoot the kudu if possible ; that was his reason for being here.

He climbed the opposite bank of the ravine to find the glade vacated. Malu had again given proof of his elusiveness. This failure reawakened Tracey's ardour ; he began

to search for spoor like a bloodhound. But the ground was hard, indications were few, and darkness stopped the hunt for that day.

Tracey returned to the spot at dawn, determined to outwit the sagacious opponent and secure that magnificent trophy. Luck was with him, it seemed he had found Malu's favourite grazing-ground. Emerging from cover, he saw the bull standing knee-deep in grass a hundred yards away. His presence was unsuspected; it was the chance he had dreamed of.

As he raised the rifle once more compassion checked him. He thrust it aside. The hunter must be ruthless, it was the law of the wild.

At the shot Malu slumped to his knees and rolled over. Tracey was exultant: a clean kill. But when, a moment later, he stood looking down at the regal beast prostrate in defeat, his satisfaction ebbed, leaving remorse. Here was strength, beauty, vitality, turned to useless corruption by his wanton act. He marvelled at the killing-lust that had possessed him. Malu alive had been of joyful interest; Malu dead was merely a chapter closed. Tracey would have given much to undo this thing.

Bending to scrutinise the wound, he found that Malu was by no means dead, in fact he was but little hurt. The badly aimed bullet had struck the base of a horn, glanced across the top of the skull, and stunned the beast. Tracey's practised fingers investigated and found the bone unharmed. Malu would have nothing more serious than a headache to remind him of this adventure.

The sportsman rose to his feet intensely relieved. He chuckled softly. 'That will teach you to steal apples, you old reprobate!'

He discovered M'lefu standing just behind him. Evi-

dently the man had been following him, had heard the shot and come forward. Tracey was annoyed.

The Kamba was staring greedily at the buck. 'Good. You kill him !' he grunted.

'No,' said Tracey. 'He is not much hurt. In a few minutes he will recover.'

M'lefu bent to verify this. He caught hold of one horn, drawing a knife from his belt.

Tracey seized his wrist. 'No,' he said fiercely. 'Leave him alone. He shall go free.'

Plainly, M'lefu thought him crazy. 'Nyama !' he growled. 'Plenty meat !'

'My property,' Tracey assured him curtly. 'I say he shall go free.' He turned to walk back to the bushes. 'Come,' he ordered.

The native followed reluctantly.

Tracey heard a sound, and turned. The kudu was struggling to his feet ; three yards from him M'lefu stood poised, his spear swinging back for a cast.

'Stop !' yelled Tracey furiously. M'lefu took no notice ; his wild eyes glared at the dazed animal, his muscles tensed for the throw which would bury the long blade in that succulent flesh.

Tracey leapt forward, striking at the spear with his rifle. The weapon was at full cock in readiness for a defensive shot.

Suddenly M'lefu was sitting on the ground holding his hand to his chest, and Tracey's arm was tingling from the recoil of the discharged rifle. Incredulously, he realised that he had shot the man. M'lefu stared at him, mouthing unintelligibly ; then he fell back inert in the grass.

Malu had got to his feet. He regarded his enemy vacantly, and walked slowly off towards the bushes. The hunter stood as if hypnotised until the kudu had disappeared.

Tracey employed all his skill to save M'lefu's life. Later, he hurried to the farm for help; the wounded man was carried in and put to bed in the house.

Forbes reported the accident to the police at the township, but when a constable arrived to make enquiries M'lefu declared it no accident but a deliberate attempt on his life.

'Grievous wounding,' was what the Crown Prosecutor called it.

Tracey could find little to say in his defence, but proof of evil intent was lacking, and he escaped imprisonment. He admitted assaulting the man; it was held that in a fit of ungovernable rage he had pulled the trigger. The reason given for the attack appeared frivolous; evidently the hunter was infuriated at seeing his quarry escape, and blamed the native.

The night he was escorted on to the ship by a uniformed policeman, Tracey explained to Forbes: 'I am glad it happened. I was dreading return to the old routine, and this business has made it impossible. People will say I am ruined and disgraced, but I am liberated. My investments will bring me enough to live on as I want to live—in some other colony. Life is beginning for me, and it was Malu who did it. I shall always remember that old chap with gratitude.'

Forbes shook his head commiseratingly. He supposed Tracey to be making the best of a great misfortune. That his friend should be filled with the happiness of a school-boy beginning his holidays was beyond his comprehension.

Months later when Tracey wrote to him from Nyasaland extolling the country and his manner of life there, he still thought the man unfortunate, a social exile. But the one-time Johannesburg doctor, bearded and bronzed, dividing his time between healing the natives and studying the fauna, would not have changed places with the King's physician.

TRAVELLING IN BYGONE ENGLAND.

BY SIR CHARLES PETRIE.

FOR those who are interested in travel, there has been of late years a new field opened up, namely the England of our ancestors. For several generations the Muse of History was a highbrow lady whose only interest lay in battles and treaties, kings and parliaments, and it is but recently that she has become more human in her tastes. In consequence, publishers and learned societies are now giving to the world letters and diaries relating the everyday life of ordinary people in the past, and many of these tell us what travelling was like in the age before trains and motor-cars. Indeed, from the beginning of the seventeenth century the subject is exceptionally well documented.

The first thing that strikes one about these contemporary narratives is the extremely slow progress which travellers made. In the reign of William and Mary it took Mrs. Manley six days to cover the 170 miles from London to Exeter, though it is only fair to add that one of them was a Sunday, on which even so 'advanced' a lady as she found it impossible, or impolitic, to proceed. Such being the case, it is little wonder that a writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in the middle of the eighteenth century should say: 'A rich citizen of London has perhaps some very valuable relatives or friends in the West; he thinks no more of visiting them than of travelling the deserts of Nubia, which might as well be in the moon, or in Limbo Patrum, considering them as a sort of separate being.' It was the same in all directions, and so late as the reign of George III, after many improvements

had been made, it took thirty hours to go from London to York, and cost £3 6s. 3d.

The reason for this was the bad state of the roads. Defoe, in his *Tour through England and Wales*, gives many instances, one of which is particularly remarkable: 'Going to church at a country village, not far from Lewes, I saw an ancient lady, and a lady of very good quality, I assure you, drawn to church in her coach with six oxen; nor was it done in frolic or humour, but mere necessity, the way being so still and deep, that no horses could go in it.' This was in the third decade of the eighteenth century. The Sussex roads had, indeed, a specially bad reputation, and Defoe mentions one from Leatherhead by Dorking to Petworth, that had disappeared altogether during the previous hundred years, but they were probably no worse than those in most other counties. Such being the case, it is easy to understand the impression made upon contemporaries by the feat of Sir Robert Carey in riding the 397 miles from Richmond to Edinburgh in sixty hours to announce Elizabeth's death to James VI. Even more remarkable was the exploit of Nicks, the highwayman, in the reign of Charles II, for he robbed a man on Gad's Hill in Kent at four o'clock one morning, and was talking to the Lord Mayor of York in that city at eight the same evening.

For the poorer classes, who had neither conveyances nor horses of their own, there were wagons which jolted their way from village to village, for although the first stage-coach, from London to Coventry, made its appearance during the Protectorate, this method of transport was not much used for another century. Even for those who possessed carriages the discomfort must have been considerable, for in winter the main roads became such seas of mud that travellers were forced to take to the fields, while it was the usual practice of the local authorities to plough up the ruts each spring.

What is surprising is not that there were so few people travelling, but that there were so many.

It was in such an England that Lieutenant Hammond (his Christian name is unknown) set out on August 4th, 1635, from Norwich to visit the Southern and Western counties. His account of the journey has been published in a recent volume of the *Camden Miscellany*, but it deserves a wider public than it is likely to achieve in this modest form, for it is the last description we possess of an England which was so soon to be changed by the Civil War. For this reason it is not without interest to compare Hammond's description with that of Defoe ninety years later, and with that of Byng when the first effects of enclosures and the Industrial Revolution were already beginning to make themselves felt.

The three travellers differed greatly in character. Hammond was a happy, jovial man, who was always willing to talk to anyone whom he might meet, and he was equally ready to join in any fun that was afoot. He was a staunch supporter of Church and King, had a great respect for ceremonial and tradition, and entertained a hearty dislike of the Scots and Welsh. Defoe, on the other hand, looked at his world through the eyes of the special correspondent of a great newspaper born several generations before his time. His sympathies were with everything that he considered to be progressive, and he could never forget that in his youth he had trailed a pike with 'King Monmouth'; nor was he by any means above using his imagination to amplify his experiences. Byng, later the fifth Viscount Torrington, was yet another type, and was, it must be confessed, a good deal of a *laudator temporis acti*. A retired colonel, he possessed to the full all the virtues and defects of his profession, but what he saw he set down in his journal, however much it might have earned his disapproval.

For our forefathers, as for ourselves, the inn was the making or the marring of a journey. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries inns were still what they had been for ages. There were no bars, no set dinners, and no dining-rooms. The rich ordered what they wanted in their own rooms, while those who could not afford this fed in the kitchen. The tradition of good cheer, too, was already old, for as early as 1129 an Imperial diplomat wrote that 'the inns in England are the best in Europe.' Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the country inn is the one unbroken link that connects the present with the remote past, for its life is the same as it was in the Middle Ages, in spite of all the changes that have taken place in the interval. The tavern scene in *Piers Plowman*, the conversation in the inn-yard in *Henry IV*, and the meeting of the Penny Club in Ben Jonson's *New Inn*, all might take place to-day. As a modern writer has so well said, 'To the inn time is static. In one breath it has seen all English history, and we of to-day are only late arrivals among its guests.'

Many of Hammond's experiences have a curiously modern ring. There can be few who, after a long journey, will not share his satisfaction in the 'holy quiet' which he found at the *Lamb* at Eastbourne, or cannot sympathise with his annoyance at Manningtree with the landlord who was 'out of his pleasant conceited noddle, very inquisitive to know from whence I came, and whither I was bound.' At the *Red Lion* at Portsmouth there was even a visitors' book to be signed, while the hostess was 'brisk, blithe, and merry, a handsome sprightly lass, fit for the company of brave commanders.' Hammond was clearly an easy-going fellow, and not too difficult to please, while Byng was the reverse. He was continually complaining of pert chambermaids, and sulky waiters; of dirty knives, and bad wine. On one occasion,

quite early in his travels, occurs the following outburst : ' I look upon an inn, as the seat of all roguery, profaneness, and debauchery ; and sicken of them every day, by hearing nothing but oaths, and abuse of each other, and brutality to horses.' Later, he found himself compelled to admit that there were exceptions, and where his cherished *Haycock* at Wansford was in question he was positively fulsome in his praise.

In effect, accommodation varied then as it does now, but the weight of the evidence would seem to show that on the whole the English inns were good, and vastly superior to anything on the Continent. We have all met our Byngs, and suffered from their company.

On the other hand, the modern traveller can go about in safety, and is under no necessity to note, as did Hammond on his way from Rochester to Canterbury, ' nor did we thinke our Purses were in any great perill of being taken from us, our Company was so strong.' Yet it is possible that the danger from highwaymen has been exaggerated. Defoe says nothing about them, and Byng has contempt, rather than pity, for those who were robbed ; according to him, the victims were often people who did not leave sufficient time for their journey, and would travel by night. Certain roads round London were generally unsafe, and Bagshot Heath and Maidenhead Thicket were notorious, while Kensington and Knightsbridge were infested with footpads who were often privates in the Guards off duty ; but Hammond, Defoe, and Byng travelled in many remote places without being molested. It is true that from time to time there were notorious hold-ups, such as the robbery of Louise de Querouaille on the Newmarket Road by Mobb, and extraordinary protection was given to distinguished foreigners, as in the case of the Prince of Tuscany, who had a large escort on his way from Plymouth to London in the reign of Charles II :

such incidents and precautions have, in retrospect, given rise to what may well be a false impression of the dangers that confronted the traveller. After all, if our descendants take the evidence of the newspapers alone, they will probably come to the conclusion that matrimony and flying were particularly hazardous enterprises in the early days of George VI, for they will hear mainly of those who came to grief in the one or the other. The number of highwaymen and footpads, too, probably rose and fell as the general prosperity of the country diminished or increased, and the close of a war always set adrift a number of men rendered desperate by their experiences or their misfortunes.

When we turn from the way in which our travellers proceeded on their journey to what they saw, all resemblance is at an end. Hammond was a witness of much that after a few more years had passed was never to be seen again. He could write of Corfe Castle, even now majestic in its ruins, 'It is so ancient as without Date, yett all her walls and Towers, the maine Castle called the Kings, the lower Castle called the Queens, the large Roomes therein, and the Leads aloft, are all in very good repayre.' He saw the paintings in Chichester Cathedral before they received the rude attentions of Waller and his men, and much that he was shown at Winchester no longer exists. It was the same with institutions as with buildings. Hammond was present at an Eyre of the Forest, which must have been one of the last of these courts ever held, for, recently revived by Charles I as a legal means of increasing the revenue, they were swept away as one of the consequences of the Great Rebellion. He gives a detailed account of the procedure, and of the charge of the Lord Chief Justice, adding 'by this time his Lordship (as he had good cause) was weary'd, and I (as I had just reason) with crowding and thrusting, was quite overyr'd.'

It was a very different England, and governed on very different principles, which Defoe traversed ninety years later. For his part, he had no doubt that the changes had been for the better, but there were more to come of which he might not have approved so cordially. The centres of industry were still in the South and West, and there was nothing to indicate even to so keen an observer that this might not be the case much longer. He prophesies, for example, that Frome in a few years 'is very likely to be one of the greatest and wealthiest inland towns in England.' Although London was already the magnet for people and goods, there were innumerable small centres of population with a vigorous life of their own. Especially was this the case with the seaport towns, for before the age of railways coastal shipping possessed very great economic importance. To these various ports came, by road or river, the merchandise of the interior, seeking the shortest route to the sea, which afforded the easiest, as well as the cheapest, means of transport. Defoe could still write of Manchester that it was 'one of the greatest, if not really the greatest, meer village in England. It is neither a wall'd town, city, or corporation; they send no members to Parliament, and the highest magistrate they have is a constable or headborough.' Yet he estimates its population at fifty thousand. Birmingham he did not consider worthy of mention, though Liverpool was already 'one of the wonders of Britain . . . there is no town in England, London excepted, that can equal Liverpoole for the fineness of the streets, and beauty of the buildings.'

Progress of the type that commended itself to Defoe was anathema to Byng. The former would have rejoiced at the continued growth of the Northern towns, while the latter, who visited Manchester in 1792, can hardly find words strong enough to express his dislike: 'Oh! what a dog hole is

Manchester ! For the old town is like Wapping ; and the upper, the new, town like Spital Fields—in the same gloom and dirt.' Later he 'wander'd about the town till dinner time, without seeing anything that I should ever wish to see again.' Byng seems to have found Birmingham rather more congenial, but chiefly because on the occasion of his visit Mrs. Siddons was acting there, and he passed most of the evening in her dressing-room. The times were disturbed, and events across the Channel were not without their effect in the Midlands. The worthy colonel found his old regiment, the Blues, at Birmingham 'quartered to maintain the peace.' But they were not what they had been when he served with them : 'I saw them parade in the High Street, and think I never saw a regiment in worse order, or looking less like soldiers, dirty, slovenly, ill-dressed, with neither fashion, nor pride about them ; and their horses were as dirty, and ill-dress'd as their riders.'

None of our three travellers has much to say about politics ; Defoe probably because he did not wish to offend potential readers, and the other two because they were not specially interested. Yet Hammond traversed an England that historians would have us believe was ablaze with indignation at the levying of Ship Money, and he says nothing about any such agitation : indeed, he concludes the account of his journey with the reflection that the country is fortunate 'to live under soe good, soe just, soe wise, soe prudent, soe vertuous and soe piously religious a Prince' as Charles I. Nothing is known of Hammond's later life, but one can hardly doubt on which side he ranged himself when the Civil War came. Byng was of Whig stock, and during his earlier travels there are several sneering allusions to the administration of the Younger Pitt, but when the storm broke in France he became, like so many members of his party, a

supporter of the Prime Minister. Nevertheless, he was, if old-fashioned in his views, no mere blind reactionary, and on page after page he gives evidence of a genuine sympathy for the wretched victims of the enclosures: 'As a sportsman I hate enclosures, and, as a citizen, I look on them as the greedy tyrannies of the wealthy few to oppress the indigent many.' Nor has he anything but the utmost contempt for those politicians at Westminster who worked themselves into a fury about injustices in India, but cared nothing for the miseries of their fellow-countrymen at home. Defoe, progressive as he prided himself on being, seems to have felt no repugnance at the enclosing of common land.

Religion attracted all three rather more than politics. Hammond toured the country when Laud was enforcing discipline on the Church, and the Archbishop's policy pleased him. On the whole he seems to have met with little of which he disapproved, save the 'fat tunbelly'd puffy-quarter'd Chuffe' non-preaching parson at Crowland, and the town of Banbury 'as full of Ale as Zeale, where they doe make no Conscience to translate an Altar to a Signe; which in my judgement is a plaine signe to judge how they stand addicted.' Defoe was more interested in Dissent than in the Establishment, though he was glad to see at Dorchester 'the church of England clergyman, and the Dissenting minister, or preacher, drinking tea together, and conversing with civility and good neighbourhood, like catholick Christians, and men of a catholick and extensive charity.' What impressed Byng most was the rapid spread of Methodism consequent upon the neglect of their duties by so many Anglican clergymen. At Ashby-de-la-Zouch he noted, as in no way exceptional, 'a Methodist chapel . . . to which there went five to the one that went to church; and no wonder, as here may be fervour and devotion.'

It was little marvel that such should be the case, for on the conclusion of his tour in the Midlands in 1789 he wrote, 'About religion I have made some enquiry (having been in so many churches) and find it to be lodged in the hands of the Methodists ; as the greater clergy do not attend to their duty, and the lesser neglect it ; that where the old psalm singing is abolished, none is established in its place ; as the organ is inconvenient, and not understood ; at most places the curates never attend regularly, or to any effect, or comfort, so no wonder that the people are gone over to Methodism.' It was, indeed, hardly remarkable, and there were times when Byng wished he had been a contemporary of Hammond : when he visited Salisbury was one of them : 'The close is comfortable, and the divines well seated ; but the house of God is kept in sad order, to the disgrace of our Church, and of Christianity. Whenever I see these things I wish for a return of the authority and Church government of a land. The church-yard is like a cow-common, as dirty and as neglected, and through the centre stagnates a boggy ditch.'

Hammond was more interested in monuments than in men, and it was only on such occasions as that on which he fell in with a party of French people that he paid any attention to the habits of those he met. With Defoe and Byng it was the opposite, and little escaped them. In the former's time, for instance, assemblies and assembly-rooms were just coming into fashion, and he has not a good word to say for them. He deplores their presence at Winchester : 'they are pleasant and agreeable to the young people, and sometimes fatal to them. . . . Winchester has its share of the mirth : may it escape the ill consequences.' One of the chief recommendations of Dorset was that such practices did not obtain, and in consequence the reputation of the ladies in that county seems 'to be better kept, guarded by better conduct, and

managed with more prudence.' Two generations later Byng also had something to say about assembly-rooms—namely, that they were so boring he was at a loss to understand why people frequented them. There is nothing strange in these diametrically opposed opinions, for it is by no means rare for one age to denounce as vicious what its successor merely considers dull.

Both the earlier travellers saw that old institution, the fair, in its hey-day. There was a most important one for poultry at Dorking, which provided employment for the whole district; and there Defoe was struck by the size of the capons he saw, which were anything up to 6 lb. in weight, and sold for between 4s. and 4s. 6d. apiece. All over the country there were fairs held on fixed dates every year, and each was noted for some special commodity. It had also been the practice to engage servants at a fair, though by the time of George I the custom was beginning to die out. Where it survived those who wished to be hired held in their hands the implements of their craft, as the carters a whip, labourers a spade, and woodmen a bill. By Byng's time the smaller centres were giving ground before the larger, and he is often found deploring the decay of country towns, as in the case of Burford, 'a poor declining place, having lost the clothing trade, and almost the saddle business, once so famous.' This was one of the developments which marked the difference between the England of Byng and that of Hammond and Defoe.

Byng rode his own horse, and so did not experience the rapid changes that were taking place even while he was making his leisurely tours. In 1784 the coaches had begun to carry the mails, and five years later they were provided with springs, of which they had previously been innocent. The next step was the introduction of lighter vehicles; and

before Byng died in 1813 he could, had he been so disposed, have gone from London to Brighton in eight hours at the cost of 15s. for a single fare. The gradual change in the speed of travelling, even by coach, can be gauged from the fact that in 1750 it took three days to go from London to Bath ; in 1776 Dr. Johnson started at 11 a.m., and arrived the next day at 7 p.m. ; while in 1827 Dickens makes his hero leave at 7 a.m., and arrive at 7.30 p.m. By then, however, the life of the roads which Hammond, Defoe, and Byng all knew was about to be stilled for two generations by the arrival of the railway, not to be revived until the motor-car came to resuscitate the habits of the past.

WITH A BUNCH OF VIOLETS.

*All that I had was a dream
That was better broken :
All that I dreamt was a word
Best left unspoken :
All that I spoke—these three
Treacherous proved to me.*

*So never again will I dream
Life more than human :
Never expect love to be
More than a woman :
And my songs will be perfect, and true,
And all of them you.*

FRANK EYRE.

SQUIBS AND THE DRUIDS.

BY M. DE B. DALY.

MRS. FERRIER HAVILAND entered her husband's workshop with a heightened colour on her rather prominent cheek-bones and a newspaper in her hand.

'Most extraordinary of Francis!' she exclaimed, tapping the paper peremptorily. 'Marrying again and not letting me know! It was pointed out to me by Mrs. Bigelow at the Club. She had the impertinence to say she believed Lord Rocke was some sort of cousin of mine! Some sort of cousin! The head of my family!'

Captain and Mrs. Haviland, whose reverence for titles bordered on fanaticism, considered that Property and Family supported their claim to be the most important residents in the British community at Sant'Anna. When they had settled in Italy twenty years ago for Captain Haviland's health, they had chosen Sant'Anna chiefly because it had the hall-mark of approval from an English countess living there. They built a large villa, filled it with beautiful old Italian furniture, and called it (in delicate compliment to Mrs. Haviland's second cousin, the fourth Baron Rocke) La Rocca. A few years later the countess decided that a central-heated London flat was better than a chilly Italian palazzo, but her departure brought with it the consolation that Mrs. Haviland was recognised as the leader of society. Mrs. Bigelow's ignorance seemed almost insulting.

Captain Haviland sympathised sincerely, but being a man of pacific nature, distracted her from her grievance by comments on the peccant Lord Rocke.

'Queer feller, Rocke. Never takes his seat in the House. Belongs to no club. Doesn't shoot. Doesn't hunt. Hard up, of course. Said to be a socialist. Anyway, manners must be rusty, or he'd have written. Who's he marrying?'

'An *Australian* ! Of course she can't be anybody, but I must try and say something nice.'

While Mrs. Haviland was concocting a letter which should combine cousinly reproach with moderate congratulation, an idea occurred to her. She immediately laid it before her husband.

'How would it be, Ferrier, as they are to be married in the summer, to lend them La Rocca for the honeymoon?'

He thought the idea excellent. So long as Rocke didn't go messing with his carpentering tools. Mrs. Haviland was sure the bride and bridegroom could not take it amiss if the workshop were locked, and, thus safeguarded, the offer was made.

Lord Rocke's answer was disappointing, for an allusion to a very quiet wedding did not even imply an invitation to it, and the honeymoon was to be spent in Ireland. Fortunately, however, he concluded with a request which gave Mrs. Haviland the desired opportunity of knitting closer the ties of kinship.

'I wonder,' wrote Lord Rocke, 'whether you know anywhere in your neighbourhood where my daughter Stephanie could board and have good sea-bathing while we are away? She is a dear girl and quite presentable. I should like you to see her, but of course by then you will have left.'

The Havilands always closed their house in May, spent the season in London, and were seen at Ascot, Henley, Lord's, Wimbledon and, above all, at the Royal Garden-party. It was therefore not surprising that Captain Haviland should consider his wife's proposal to stay in Sant'Anna for

a young girl's convenience almost revolutionary. Mrs. Haviland saw the matter required careful handling.

'I have been thinking for some time, Ferrier,' she said, not quite accurately, 'that London would be too much for you this year. You remember Dr. Field said, "Don't tire yourself; don't stand on your game leg; have plenty of sun and air." How can we manage that in London in the season? Everyone says it is lovely here in June and July. We could invite Stephanie for a long visit, go to Salso for treatment for your leg, and then to Scotland.'

Captain Haviland did not like the idea at all, but he was nervous about his health, and after a few protests gave in with a good grace.

Not even to her husband did Mrs. Haviland confide her ulterior motive. Stephanie, though by now twenty, had never been presented. Who could perform this important social duty better than a cousin? Mrs. Haviland was parsimonious in small matters, but lavish in those she considered important; she decided to offer to pay her own and the girl's expenses at a next year's drawing-room. After that, even the ignorant Mrs. Bigelow of Sant'Anna could not ignore her aristocratic connections. A streak of caution made her want to inspect her young cousin before committing herself. There was no need to say anything to Ferrier at present, or, if she did not like the girl, at all.

At her last luncheon party of the season, Mrs. Haviland's guests were surprised to learn that she and her husband were renouncing the London season in order to receive the Honourable Stephanie Coulson at Sant'Anna.

'Of course it is rather a sacrifice,' she said, 'but I really couldn't refuse my cousin Francis—Lord Rocke, you know. He is so anxious we should have her while he is on his honeymoon, and says he cannot be grateful enough to us.'

Her guests agreed that his lordship had every reason for gratitude.

The La Rocca luncheon parties were famous, though not altogether in the way Mrs. Haviland supposed. Everybody, she admitted, could not have their own good fortune in being both well born and well off, but her guests must always be one or the other, or (better still) own a title. Sir Joseph Hutton was an extremely dull old man with an ear-trumpet, but to criticise one whom his sovereign had delighted to honour would have been *lèse majesté*. Miss Bilkington, of Bilkington Hall, Wilts, was an elderly, ugly, and pompous woman of undistinguished family but great wealth; she took a whole floor of the best hotel, and lived there for five months of the year in all the luxury her long purse could provide. These and other guests shared, in greater or less degree, the Havilands' reverence for Property and Family.

Captain and Mrs. Haviland would have been astonished to learn that in a younger and more democratic section of the community they were nicknamed the Druids.

II.

Charles Philipson ran lightly up the Tiger Rock, stood for a moment poised on the Tiger's left ear, and then, with raised arms and thin, taut body bent into a slender bronze sickle, dived off it into the Mediterranean. It was such a clean dive that the waters stirred little more than if cleft by a blade. The glittering surface closed over him and swayed in endless rhythm as if still inviolate. A few minutes later, at the sea-level of the Tortoise Rock, on which several copper-coloured figures lay stretched in attitudes of indolence, Charles's head appeared from below. Cursing the slippery brown weed, he drew himself slitheringly up on to the

dry surface, and sank flat on his back with outstretched arms.

'Gosh! That was gorgeous! The sea's like liquid satin!'

'Or honey that isn't sticky,' agreed a muffled voice coming from a prone figure lying on its face.

'How could satin be liquid? How could honey not be sticky?' Sybilla Morton, the only alert one of the company, always asked questions, and usually those which no one wanted to answer. Her figure, delightfully revealed by a bathing dress consisting of little more than a few emerald green straps, was sheer poetry, but her nature was prosaic.

'Oh, hark at her!' cried Charles. 'Or rather, don't hark at her, but listen to me! Have you heard the news?'

A galvanic movement of bodies, a lifting of heads, and a murmur of voices showed that even bathers replete with sun and sea were not quite devoid of curiosity.

'The Druids are having a visitor!' Charles announced solemnly.

'Good lord, is that all? They can have the whole of Debrett and welcome!' Heads and bodies relaxed.

'Wait! That is not all! The Druids' visitor is a girl, and she's coming to bathe with our crowd!'

Charles had his effect. There was a chorus of protest, and Pat Frere, with legal aspirations, summed up the case.

'Any ordinary girl is welcome, especially if she's decent-looking and can do a spot of diving, but an interloper from the Druid strongholds, no! No! Who is responsible?'

'Jennifer couldn't help herself,' Jennifer's husband declared, sitting up to squeeze water from his hair; 'the Arch-Druidess met her, and was so matey that Jay at once knew she wanted something. Sure 'nough!'

'To plant her visitor on us!'

'Yes. Her "Cousin Rocke's girl."'

'A genuine young Druidess! Double-dyed! Treble distilled! Blue blood that won't tan! Brothers at Eton!'

Charles became defensive. 'I've known Etonians with quite passable sisters.'

'It's an appalling risk,' objected Pat. 'Why didn't Jennifer say we were scrofulous?'

Jennifer, emerging from the water, demanded and received an explanation. It ended with an accusation.

'The fact is, Jennifer, my dear, you and Charles are too grand!'

'Grand! You know where we live! And how we work!'

'Charles's father is an Admiral, your grandfather is a baronet!'

This was hitting below the belt, and Jennifer loyally declared that both were dears.

Sybilla had been listening rather impatiently to this airy trifling, and now began, 'But seriously . . .' Someone threw a clot of damp seaweed at her, and she amended her remark.

'But really, tell us more about this girl. What's her name? When's she coming? How long will she stay?'

'Her name,' said Jennifer patiently, 'is Stephanie Coulson. She's arriving on Thursday. She'll be here several weeks. And that's all I know.'

Charles shook his head at the hopeful suggestion that the young Druidess had committed a crime and was being pushed abroad till it should be forgotten in Druid circles. 'Lord Rocke is marrying again, and the lass wants to recover from the shock.'

Pat cheered up. 'Well, failing a crime, a wicked step-mother is an extenuating circumstance. Is the stepmother

wicked? Sure to be. And the girl beautiful? Of course she is. Let us be kind to her.'

Jennifer said rather dismally, 'I hope she won't be shocked at our manners and costumes.'

'I'll mend this hole.' Sybilla was always practical.

'Darling Syb, don't overdo it. Dressiness is out of place on the Animal Rocks. She must take us as she finds us.'

'Let's go in.' Charles thought it time to attend to essentials, of which bathing was one, and a stray girl was not. A moment later the Tortoise Rock was deserted and the sea around it frothing and bubbling over the intruders. Their light-hearted frolics were as merry and inconsequent, though not as silent, as those of a shoal of dolphins.

Pat Frere, who was last to dive, called down to Jennifer before he plunged:

'I came here for the simple life. If your young Druid has scarlet toe-nails and silver hair, I shall swim out to the Elephant Rock and leave you to it.'

III.

Neither Captain nor Mrs. Haviland knew anything about young people except that they had altered (very much for the worse) since they were young themselves. They expected their visitor to be modern, but had the haziest idea of what the word meant. They were, however, determined to be broad-minded.

'I suppose she will want cocktails,' Captain Haviland remarked lugubriously. He was an abstemious man and disliked seeing women drink spirits. Mrs. Haviland's thoughts flew to the price of alcohol.

'Oh, surely,' she exclaimed, 'she could manage with vermouth?' This innocuous beverage was always handed round before the famous luncheon parties.

'If she's been used to cocktails, cocktails she must have,' replied her husband firmly, 'but I sincerely trust she won't wear shorts. I abominate female knees.'

'She is Rocke's daughter and not a professional tennis-player. Girls in our class know how to dress.'

'H'm.' Captain Haviland had seen pictures which made him dubious. 'If girls are modern enough, nothing is too much—or too little—for them to wear.' Under the influence of his joke he cheered up. 'However, the thing's done, and we must put up with her.'

'I hope I didn't make a mistake in asking the Philipsons to look after her,' his wife said; 'they themselves are all right (Mrs. Philipson was a Hazelden), but they have some rather queer friends.'

'Of course you couldn't know all those literary and artistic people in England, but it doesn't matter out here, and Mrs. Charles will chaperone her.'

Captain Haviland had the old-fashioned idea that any married woman protects the morals and reputation of the unmarried.

'Of course,' added his wife consolingly, 'I only asked her definitely for a month. Then, if we find her tiresome, we'll say it's too hot, and go on to Salso.'

When Stephanie Coulson arrived she did not seem likely to prove tiresome. She was a small, brown-haired girl, with a good complexion, beautiful eyes, and delicate features which Mrs. Haviland called aristocratic. Her quick, light movements seemed to make her dance as she walked, and her face glowed with life and merriment. She used a great deal of slang, and had a large supply of often singularly inappropriate adjectives. Mrs. Haviland was relieved to find that her young cousin maintained class prestige by not wearing shorts. She never discovered that Stephanie only

did not do so because her dress allowance was small and her taste fastidious—creased or ill-cut shorts being, in her opinion, hell.

Captain Haviland duly offered his guest a cocktail. She thanked him politely, but refused it, saying :

‘I had one once. It was the foulest muck. I daresay yours aren’t, Cousin Ferrier, but if you don’t mind I’d rather not risk it.’

Although it seemed a pity that a young girl (at least if the daughter of a peer) should express herself like a school-boy, Captain Haviland condoned this for the excellence of the sentiment. Mrs. Haviland wondered if the wine-merchant would take back the bottles.

Some minor shocks were inevitable.

‘I hope you slept well, Stephanie?’ Mrs. Haviland asked when the girl appeared for breakfast the day after her arrival. She did not answer for a moment, and then, as no one spoke, she said :

‘Who? Me? Oh, I’m sorry, Cousin Isobel, but I’m not called Stephanie. My name is Squibs.’

‘I should have said your name is Stephanie, but you are called Squibs,’ Captain Haviland corrected her rather ponderously. ‘Well, my dear, we shall be pleased to call you by your family nickname, although it’s a little peculiar. I trust Miss Squibs slept well?’

‘Yes, rather, I always do. But it’s not only a family name. Everybody calls me Squibs.’

And so they did. Letters arrived most improperly addressed to Miss Squibs Coulson, the La Rocca servants, who thought her perfection, soon called her ‘la Signorina Squeebse,’ and before the acquaintance was a day old all the bathers at the Animal Rocks knew her only as Squibs. They quite forgot she was a Druid.

IV.

Squibs was interested in everything and everybody. In La Rocca, Cousin Ferrier and Cousin Isobel, in their priceless Italian servants, in the Philipsons, and the Philipsons' friends, and the frightfully marvellous bathing ; all were wonderful to her. The dear old funnies, though not quite as thrilling as the bathers, were perfect old pets. Cousin Ferrier, so important with his carpentering, was the weirdest darling, and Cousin Isobel, always writing unnecessary letters, so that she might enclose them in others, with English stamps to save postage, was gorgeous. Words almost failed her in admiration of Jennifer, whose tall, straight figure, regular features, and shining black hair she thought absolutely heavenly. Charles (*actually* when not convalescing from pneumonia employed on the staff of a London paper !) was really, with his bronzed body and flaxen hair, quite too romantic—no wonder everyone was goopy about him, but of course he and Jennifer simply adored each other.

Mrs. Haviland sometimes talked of going down to the bathing beach, but in the end always preferred a wicker chair under her pergola to a camp stool on a shadeless rock. Thus for a time Squibs managed to make the best of two worlds. She enjoyed the luxury of La Rocca, where she chattered gaily about people who seemed only to have Christian names, and was much more considerate to her elders than they had expected. Every morning she raced down to the bathing beach, swam and dived in the shimmering water, or soaked in sunshine on the rocks. La Rocca was forgotten until the luncheon hour drew near. Then, exclaiming that she was simply famishing, she flung herself into her clothes in an incredibly short time, sprang up the hill like a young gazelle, and when the gong sounded was in the hall

looking as if she had spent the whole morning over her toilet.

The first clash between her worlds came one morning when Mrs. Haviland and Squibs were finishing breakfast on the loggia. Captain Haviland had already gone to his workshop.

'By Gosh! I promised to ring up!' exclaimed Squibs. 'Will you excuse me, Cousin Isobel?' and at a nod from her cousin she jumped up and ran indoors. Mrs. Haviland could hear every word from where she sat.

'I say, are you Peter Davey? . . . Well, look here, Jennifer says, come down to the Animal Rocks this morning. . . . We'll all be there. . . . Splendid! . . . Oh, it's Squibs speaking, Squibs Coulson, but you don't know me. . . . We'll meet in the water. . . . Righto!'

Mrs. Haviland rose and her hair almost rose too as she threw down her napkin and went into the hall.

'Who are you speaking to, Squibs?' she demanded.

'A bloke called Peter Davey, Cousin Isobel. He is——'

'I know quite well who Peter Davey is. I heard that Dr. Field's nephew was expected. He is a nobody. It is most unsuitable that you should speak of yourself to an unknown young man as Squibs. To any young man, in fact. You should say "Miss Coulson."'

'Oh, Cousin Isobel, I couldn't! I should split! "Miss Coulson wants to speak to Mr. Davey on the telephone!"'

Mrs. Haviland did not laugh.

'Nicknames are not suitable between strangers, and I can't think why your father lets you use a word like "bloke."'

'He doesn't, and I won't if you don't like it, Cousin Isobel. And I'll try and remember to call myself "Miss Coulson" every time I telephone to people I don't know.'

This handsome offer closed the incident.

At lunch that day Squibs mentioned that Peter Davey had brought quite a decent friend called Lord Bill. Mrs. Haviland, whose thumbs pricked at the most distant allusion to an aristocrat, asked for information.

'I dunno who he is,' replied Squibs, who cared less. 'They call him Lord William, or Lord Bill, or William, or Bill. He's quite a nobby bl—— I mean chap, with a priceless red rubber boat.'

Mrs. Haviland already foresaw relationship with a duke or at worst a marquess, and decided not to go down to the bathing beach. It would be better to make the young man's acquaintance more formally. Squibs could tell her nothing about him except that his rubber boat was too wizard for words. Mrs. Haviland, after trying vainly to track him through the mazes of Debrett, postponed enquiries. At the first possible moment Squibs should invite him to La Rocca, where the stately house and lovely grounds would have their value.

For several days Squibs prattled gaily about Bill and his boat. Her cousins began to think that, after all, the informal habits of the bathers, hitherto deplored, might be useful. The opportunity to send an invitation soon came.

'We went right round Capo Bruno,' babbled Squibs; 'the boat wobbled frightfully, and we upset twice, but we landed at Cersiana, and had iced doodahs in our bathing suits at a café with pink oleanders all round.'

'At a café in your bathing suits!'

'Yes, a scream, because the walls were plastered with notices saying people in bathing dresses wouldn't be served! Nobody had much more. Some had less. It is awkward having no pockets. Poor Bill had to telephone to Sant'Anna

for credit. My goodness, how we whacked in when he got it !'

Mrs. Haviland smiled tolerantly.

'Then you must return his hospitality, Squibs. It was very kind of him to give you so many iced—so many ices !'

'Oh, what's a few ices ?' asked Squibs lightly. 'But I'll tell him to roll along to a feed one day, shall I ? He's not a bad lad. By the way, he's heard of your marvellous glass.'

Captain and Mrs. Haviland glowed with pride. Their Venetian glass was very beautiful, and it was gratifying to learn that its fame had reached the highest circles.

'Ask him to supper on Thursday, dear, and he shall see it. I like a young man to be interested in the artistic.'

Mrs. Haviland and Marco, the chef, took a great deal of trouble about the menu for Thursday's supper, and Captain Haviland discussed the wines several times with the butler.

The two men-servants were confirmed in their conviction that the English were incomprehensible.

'All this for the giovane Lord !' exclaimed Marco. 'No doubt a *bravissimo ragazzo*, but to be received like this at La Rocca. *Per Bacco !*'

'Do you mind not dressing to-night, Cousin Ferrier ?' asked Squibs, when the day came. 'Bill's not brought a dinner-jacket. They wear any old thing here in the summer.'

Captain Haviland, though he deplored the decadence of the English gentleman, who apparently no longer dressed for dinner in the desert, agreed to wear a white suit.

'There he is !' cried Squibs, as they waited in the drawing-room for the guest. 'I'll go and fetch him along, lest he should be all of a dither !'

She ran out, and a minute later reappeared, unceremoniously pulling in a fair-haired, stocky young man with an intelligent face.

'Here's Mr. Lord, Cousin Isobel!' she said, remembering her manners.

Mrs. Haviland, stately in mauve brocade, with her husband rather like a drooping white eagle behind her, had advanced with outstretched hand. She now dropped it, colour flooded her face, and she stood speechless, her mouth open, her jaws working in a vain effort to express her emotion.

'Ferrier, it's Lord's son!' she gasped at last, and then, to the young man, 'How abominable! How dare you!'

Captain Haviland's eyeglass dropped the length of its black ribbon, but he said nothing.

The young man, absolutely bewildered, looked from his hostess to Squibs and from Squibs to his hostess.

'But—but——' he stammered, 'didn't Squibs tell you? Squibs, you did, didn't you?'

'Tell them what, you gumph?' cried Squibs. 'Are you all mad?'

The guest turned to Captain Haviland.

'I am sorry, sir. I supposed Squibs knew all about it, though I never actually mentioned it. It is all so long ago. She told you my name, and when she brought your kind invitation,'—he gave a little courteous, foreign bow to his hostess—'I thought that you wished to know that the past was the past.'

'The past!' exclaimed Captain Haviland. 'It is the present too! You are who you are. We can't reproach you with your father's failings, but you must admit you are not a suitable guest in this house.'

'Why ever not?' burst in Squibs. 'What's poor Bill done? And what's his father got to do with it?'

'If you imagine you are going to sit at my table, young Lord, you are quite mistaken!' cried Mrs. Haviland. 'The only place for you in my dining-room is behind my chair!'

'Oh, come, come, Isobel!' expostulated Captain Haviland; 'I always heard that Lord's son had done very well, and shaken off his unfortunate family——'

William Lord interrupted him vehemently.

'Not at all, sir! My father is dead, and I have been adopted by an uncle, but I am here to see my mother——'

'We are not interested in your family affairs!' Mrs. Haviland said scornfully. Her husband did not let her continue.

'It has been a most unfortunate misunderstanding——' he began, but the young man interrupted him without much ceremony.

'Yes, sir. I am delaying your supper, and I will leave you now to enjoy it. Good night, Squibs, it wasn't your fault.'

'If you won't stay, I won't either! Food here would choke me!' Squibs cried. 'I'll go down to Jennifer!'

Bill Lord patted her arm.

'Don't be a silly little ass. You can't leave your cousins' house in the middle of the night. Be a good girl.' He had gone almost before he had finished speaking.

Squibs, two bright red spots glowing in her cheeks, turned furiously to her cousins.

'What's it matter who Bill's father was? He had a rotten time in the old war, and if he *did* drink afterwards, I don't blame him! Better than staying at home and making money like that awful old Sir Joseph!'

'Young Lord made one sensible remark,' Mrs. Haviland said scathingly. 'You certainly can't leave here in the night, but you had better go home as soon as we can make arrangements. Your behaviour——'

She was about to qualify it, but Captain Haviland spoke first.

'There is no need to discuss this now, Isobel. Let us have supper, and say nothing about it till the morning. By then we shall all have had time to get over this very unpleasant incident.'

'I do not require supper,' began Mrs. Haviland, and then remembered the servants, 'but I suppose we had better go into the dining-room. Ferrier, tell Antonio that our guest has—unfortunately—' she gulped over the word—'had to go home. They can serve at once.'

Captain Haviland went to do her bidding, and his wife, disappointed and humiliated, all her plans of present and future grandeur shattered, turned almost viciously to her young cousin.

'That's your gratitude for all I've done for you! You insult me by bringing as a guest to my house the son of our drunken butler!'

Squibs was so surprised that she almost forgot her anger.

'So that's what it's all about!' she exclaimed. 'Bill's father was your butler! The one that drank! Oh, poor Bill! He *did* say his father had told him about your glass!' She began to laugh, but stopped short when Mrs. Haviland, infuriated at her amusement, almost shouted at her:

'Yes, nice people your beloved bathing friends know! William Lord is the son of a drunken butler and an Italian dressmaker—in fact, a half-breed!'

'Oh! Oh! Oh! I won't bear it!' cried Squibs, and ran out of the room with a wail of anguish, nearly knocking down Captain Haviland as he entered.

'What is it now?' he asked. 'I hoped the child would be sensible.'

'I told her I didn't approve of her half-breed friend.'

'That was an unfortunate expression, Isobel.'

Well, he *is* a half-breed, isn't he?'

'To that extent, my dear, so are many people. Even most Royalty!'

This observation was like a cold douche on Mrs. Haviland.

'The servants will think it strange if we don't go in,' she said, recalling her British regard for appearances. She rather lamely told Antonio that Signorina Stefania had gone to bed with a headache and Marietta must take her up a plate of soup. Husband and wife heroically talked platitudes until after Antonio had served coffee on the loggia. Mrs. Haviland then came to the point.

'Of course Squibs must go home.'

'I suppose so,' her husband agreed sadly. He too had his disappointment, for since Squibs had been at La Rocca he had felt younger, the sun had shone more brightly, the world seemed gayer. He had even dreamed that she might make her home with them.

'It would be a pity to exaggerate,' he began tentatively.

'Exaggerate, Ferrier! That would be difficult! Flirting with the son of a drunken butler! Bringing him to the house under false pretences! Making out he was the son of a Duke!'

Captain Haviland's sense of fair play rebelled, and he spoke quite sharply.

'Nonsense, Isobel! I have seen no signs of flirting. Rather tomboy behaviour, perhaps. I am convinced that Squibs had no idea of our mistake. I imagine the young man is called Lord Bill in reference to the Italian way of putting the surname first.'

'I see you are determined to defend Squibs and her common admirer,' Mrs. Haviland replied coldly, 'but she must go!'

'You can't turn Rocke's girl out of the house!'

'Of course not. We will tell Francis that we are going to

Salso earlier than we had intended. I will book rooms from next Monday, and get Squibs' ticket for the same day. But before she goes I will tell her what I think of her !'

Captain Haviland sighed.

'You—you'll be considerate, Isobel. She's young. Don't be severe with the child.'

'One can hardly be too severe on behaviour of that sort in a girl of our class. *Noblesse oblige* ! I shall, of course, be just, and you may be sure I shall be as considerate as she deserves.'

She went indoors to write to Salso and to ponder carefully how to be at once severe, just, and considerate.

V.

Marietta staggered up under a tray laden with all the delicacies of the supper table. It gave her the keenest pleasure to disobey her instructions, as she was convinced that the Signora's 'plate of soup' was intended as a punishment.

Squibs, her face buried in pillows as she lay face downwards on her bed, did not hear Marietta knock or enter, but when she spoke turned a tear-stained face to her.

'Courage, Signorina !' said Marietta in a mysterious whisper, 'it will all come right ! Do not despair !'

Squibs, hastily brushing her arm across her face, looked at her in surprise. Marietta spoke a mixture of French, Italian, and English which Squibs understood quite well, but she could not imagine what she meant. 'It will be all right !' repeated Marietta, still whispering, and looking guiltily at the door and window. 'I will help you ! I will take a note to him ! Write it quickly ! He shall have it to-night !'

Marietta was amazed, because the Signorina, after looking

at her in a puzzled way, broke into peals of almost hysterical laughter.

'You are an angel, Marietta,' Squibs said at last. 'But I won't bother you. I say, what heavenly food! Poor Bill, what he's missing!'

Marietta returned to the kitchen thinking that Signorina Squibs was as strange as other English. Instead of bewailing her love-affair, and allowing herself to be tempted to a few mouthfuls, she was bubbling with merriment as she made heavy inroads on the *insalata russa*. The kitchen staff decided that the Signorina's admirer must be hiding in the garden, ready to talk to her as soon as the house was quiet.

Squibs, having forgotten that food would choke her, enjoyed her supper in the most prosaic way, went to bed and to sleep. She woke early, however, feeling that the world, in spite of the sunshine glittering through the bougainvillea, was somehow out of joint, and only Jennifer could set it right.

With Squibs to think was usually to act, and in a few moments she had thrown on some clothes and was racing down the road to Villa Carlotta. Jennifer listened quietly to her story and then said:

'You must remember they are Druids.'

Squibs pricked up her ears.

'Somebody once said something about Druids, and you shut them up.'

'Because they were your aged relatives. But it'll help you to understand.' She explained.

Squibs crowed with delight.

'Gee! Isn't that grandiose! Dear stuffy old Druids! Funny old Druids! You know, they really are quite lambs sometimes, and Daddy Druid is a darling!'

After she had allowed her fancy to play round pictures of Cousin Ferrier with a wreath of mistletoe and Cousin Isobel

crowned with oak-leaves, they considered the problem before them.

Squibs was enchanted by an invitation to share the penuries of Villa Carlotta until she wanted to go home. Her capacity for enjoyment was unlimited. The marbles, mosaics, frescoes, parquets, and large household staff of La Rocca had been heavenly, but it would be terribly exciting to live in a shabby little house and help Jennifer to help Filomena with the work. Then she braced herself for the ordeal of apology.

'Well, I must be off to Stonehenge, and I'll come back as soon as I politely can.'

Captain and Mrs. Haviland were at breakfast on the loggia when Squibs, very red in the face, appeared, and blurted out :

'I'm sorry I spoke as I did, Cousin Isobel.'

'I accept your apology, Stephanie, but that is not all. Your behaviour has been most unsuitable.' Mrs. Haviland, her husband's eye upon her, was trying to be lenient.

'Yes, I'm afraid I *am* rather unsuitable, Cousin Isobel. You don't approve of me, and I'd better not stay any longer. You've been most frightfully kind. Thank you so much.'

Mrs. Haviland felt like an outmanœuvred general. She had not had a chance to tell the girl to go. She said with much dignity :

'Your Cousin Ferrier and I had already decided that it was better for us to part. We are leaving for Salso on Monday, and you can start for England the same day. Then there will be no fuss.'

Squibs, with a sigh of relief that her scolding was over so easily, flung herself into a chair.

'Of course not. I hate fusses, don't you? But please, you mustn't alter your plans because of me. Jennifer and Charles have asked me to stay with them. Aren't they angel-monkey-faces?'

It was a bombshell. The shattering of Mrs. Haviland's plans for next year's drawing-room and of her dreams of a ducal alliance had been bad enough, but no one knew of them ; if the Honourable Stephanie went from the palatial La Rocca to the humble little Villa Carlotta her flirtation with the butler's son would be common gossip. Yet she could not reasonably forbid Squibs to accept the invitation. Outwardly calm, but inwardly furious, she said stiffly :

'That, of course, will be delightful for you.'

VI.

Five months later guests were assembling at La Rocca for the first luncheon party of the season. Mrs. Haviland had been enormously relieved to find that any gossip which Squibs' behaviour might have caused had been forgotten by the time the more elect English residents returned. The whole affair, she thankfully told herself, was over and done with.

Vermouth was already being handed round when the door opened to admit Miss Bilkington, of Bilkington Park, who had only recently returned to Sant'Anna. She seemed to have yet another chin and to be larger than ever ; her tiers of massive flesh were clad in unnecessarily close-fitting iron-grey cloth, and she sailed across the shining parquet with all the majesty of a super-dreadnought.

'So sorry, dear Mrs. Haviland,' her deep voice boomed out, 'I'm afraid I'm a little late ! Some papers to sign—so tiresome ! But how charming to see you again ! And looking so well ! Captain Haviland, younger than ever ! How delightful !'

The opening amenities being over and lunch begun, Miss Bilkington again held the floor. It was, indeed, difficult for other conversation to be heard when she was speaking.

'I met a distant cousin of yours the other day, Captain Haviland. Or was it some connection of your wife's? Lord Rocke——'

'The head of my family,' Mrs. Haviland put in with as chilly an inflection as may be permitted to a guest. Sir Joseph Hutton, deafer than ever and his garrulity still more senile, heard the name, and pounced on it in the hawk-like way he did whenever, poor old man, he could catch a word.

'What's that? Rocke? Lord Rocke? Been staying near his place. Poisonous fellow, poisonous, poisonous! Socialist. Married a rich woman. Trust a socialist, ha, ha! Spending her money on his cottages! Hard luck on other landowners. Taps, baths, electric light! What do cottagers want with 'em?'

It was quite impossible to stop him, but efforts to drown him were more successful. All the guests began to talk busily. Miss Bilkington, of course, was best able to cope with the situation, and Sir Joseph's indiscreet meanderings soon petered out under her broadside. Unfortunately the remedy proved almost worse than the disease.

'Your cousin—your wife's cousin, I should say—told me how pleased they all were about his daughter's engagement. Very unworldly of them, I'm sure! He likes the young fellow so much! No money. Nobody seems to mind. But of course you know all about it, as she met him here, didn't she? Staying with you, I believe? How charming for you, dear young things.'

Captain Haviland sat, a picture of astonishment, but his wife, after a lightning survey of future relations with her noble cousin, plunged heroically.

'Yes, quite a romance, wasn't it? A very fine young fellow. We knew him when he was a little boy, but had not seen him since. They say he will go far.'

Sir Joseph being now headed off, it was possible to introduce the far less contentious subject of politics ; in that, at least, there was no possibility of divergence of opinion among La Rocca guests. As they left they all said what a splendid hostess Mrs. Haviland was, so bright and animated, so charming to all, so clever at keeping the ball rolling. None suspected what it had cost the mistress of La Rocca to sustain her reputation.

A weaker woman would have collapsed after the departure of the last guest. Mrs. Haviland, hardly waiting to consult her husband, sat down to write a letter. It was very similar to one she had written before, but this time she had her reward by return of post.

'MY DEAR COUSIN ISOBEL' [wrote Squibs]

'It's too angelic of you both, after all the bother I was and all. We're hugely happy, and it's all due to your invitation ! But you've got it wrong. Bill's only to be best man, it's Patrick Frere who's taking me on for keeps. Pat's almost a barrister, and he says the great advantage is that it's a brief career ! He's awfully witty. My love to dear Cousin Ferrier, and I'll answer his pet of a note to-morrow. I don't want to miss a post.

'Your loving

'SQUIBS.

'P.S. Yes, we're going to be married in June, and we'd simply adore to come to La Rocca for the honeymoon.'

Mrs. Haviland gave a sigh of relief. She handed the letter to her husband, saying hopefully :

'The law's respectable, and after all, perhaps he's one of the Southshire Freres !'

Bordighera.

RONA.

BY ALASDAIR ALPIN MACGREGOR.

SITUATED in the North Atlantic, at a distance of forty-four miles north-north-east from the Butt of Lewis and of forty-five miles west of Cape Wrath, is the Island of North Rona, referred to in ancient times as Ronay. If we exclude Rockall, which is little more than a dot of rock rising some seventy feet out of the Atlantic wastes roughly a hundred and eighty-four miles west of St. Kilda, and which Captain Basil Hall (*circa* 1810) described so aptly as 'the most isolated speck in the world,' this Isle of the Seals (for such is the meaning of Rona, *ròn* being the Gaelic for a seal) may be regarded as the loneliest of the British Isles.

Rona forms part of Barvas, one of the northern parishes of Lewis, in the Outer Hebrides. It is lonelier far than the St. Kilda group of islands, for, though some years have elapsed since the St. Kildans were transferred to the mainland of Scotland, the *Hebrides* and her sistership, the *Dunara Castle*, two well-found vessels sailing from Glasgow by circuitous routes, pay frequent visits during the summer months to Hirta, the largest island of the St. Kilda group, and the one on which man had contrived to exist continuously for at least a thousand years. Only once a year, and then but for a few hours' duration, does Rona occupy man's vision, and feel the weight of man's feet; and that is when the men from Ness—that rugged and densely populated promontory on which the Hebrideans cultivate what is regarded as the most fertile soil in the Outer Isles—sail thither usually in July,

mainly to attend to the sheep owned by a certain Mr. Alexander MacFarquhar, a farmer who resides at Dell, in the north of Lewis.

It is believed, however, by those who annually visit Rona with Mr. MacFarquhar that trawlermen, pursuing their calling in North Atlantic and Icelandic waters, sometimes land on Rona for the purpose of replenishing their depleted larder with mutton ! But for the greater part of the year Rona is completely cut off by tempests and prolonged fogs.

Mr. MacFarquhar has assured me on more than one occasion that, when approaching Rona, he has heard the seals frequenting its waters making music 'like a great, Gaelic congregation singing psalms.' Apart from the sheep, the seal may be regarded as Rona's largest mammal, though whales often are sighted in its vicinity. The seals breed on the lower ledges of the rocky coast, where it is not altogether shoreless, and also on the neighbouring skerries. Their number has been estimated at roughly two hundred and fifty.

The Island possesses neither rabbits nor reptiles ; and careful observations carried out by at least three competent naturalists failed to prove the existence either of rats or of mice.

The bird-life of Rona is similar to that of St. Kilda, or of the Flannan Isles. The commonest bird is Leach's fork-tailed petrel. The species next in importance is the fulmar. More than fifty species of birds, resident and migratory, have been listed on Rona by T. H. Harrison, the ornithologist.

The mystery of North Rona cannot be very different from that of Hirta, since it also was peopled on a time, and likewise had to be abandoned to the seals and the ghosts and the sea-birds. Here is another outpost of Scotland where,

in the struggle for existence, Nature has conquered man, and compelled him to retreat more than forty miles.

This Isle of the Seals (called *North Rona* so as to distinguish it from *South Rona*, which lies between Skye and the mainland of Wester Ross) is approximately a mile and a half in length from north to south. Toward the south it attains a maximum breadth of about a mile. It is composed of Lewisian gneiss, the oldest-known rock in the world. Its total area is somewhere in the neighbourhood of three hundred acres. 'The island has the shape of a decanter with the neck towards the north,' wrote Captain Burnaby, who visited Rona in the early spring of 1852; and his description is accepted by more recent investigators as being quite appropriate. The impression Rona makes upon one approaching it for the first time is at once startling and enduring; and the experience of setting foot on such territory, as the writer well knows, defeats all powers of tongue or pen, for the nature of such experience is basic, elemental, remote. The abiding solitude, disturbed only by the breaking seas, by the occasional bleating of sheep, by the haunting calls of sea-fowl, and often by the roar of wind among the cliffs and caverns, never fails to convey one back and back to time primordial.

The cliffs of Rona are of considerable height; and they fall sheer to the Atlantic. They are the resort of countless sea-birds. In this respect Rona resembles *Sula Sgeir*, that lone and precipitous gannetry lying roughly a dozen miles to the westward, and likewise visited annually by a fowling party from Lewis. These cliffs are exposed to the unbridled fury of the Atlantean storms; and out of them sea erosion has scooped innumerable caves and geos.

According to Sir Archibald Geikie, who landed on Rona in 1894, the sea has piled up, in the form of a huge ridge

more than seventy feet in height, great quantities of blocks of rock along the north-western coast, with the result that, in time of gales and heavy seas, tons of sea water have been thrown up over this ridge, and have descended eastward to the sea in streams that have cut their courses down through the turf surface to the naked gneiss below.

Except for the northern and south-western extremities, Rona supports a flourishing vegetation. There is neither heather nor peat; but grass grows profusely, and to an unusual height in places. This grass affords rich pasturage for the two hundred sheep belonging to Mr. MacFarquhar, aforementioned. In the absence of heather, the natives burned dried divots, and driftwood when it was procurable.

There is no running water on the Island, apart from those temporary streams of brine sent over by gales from the north-west, and referred to by Geikie as having cut channels down through the turf to the gneiss. But seldom does Rona pine for moisture: rain, on the contrary, is one of its most insistent visitors. On the lower ground water may be found readily by digging, especially to the south of the ruined and deserted village. In olden times the Island possessed several wells. Though the sites of many of these are marked on the Ordnance Survey Map, and still may be seen, only the well located near Poll Heallair, in the south, is serviceable at the present time.

Probably the earliest record we possess of Rona is that contained in the celebrated *Descriptione of the Western Isles of Scotland called Hybrides*, by Donald Monro, High Dean of the Isles, who made his historic itinerary about the middle of the sixteenth century. Dean Monro refers to this Island as having been exceptionally fertile, 'and inhabit and manurit be simple people, scant of ony religione.' In his day, Rona carried both sheep and cattle, with the flesh of which the

inhabitants paid to MacLeod of Lewis, their overlord, the greater part of their dues. Quantities of the meal of bere, transported from Rona to Lewis in the skins of native sheep, and also sea-fowl taken on the cliffs and skerries, comprised the remainder of their payment in kind. This rental was collected by MacLeod's steward, who visited Rona annually.

Monro mentions, too, that the inhabitants used to catch many whales 'and uthers grate fisches.' In referring to St. Ronay's (Ronan's) Chapel, he tells us that within this building they used to retain a spade and a shovel, and that, whenever any member of the community died, his neighbours purported to discover on the morrow that these implements were marking the spot at which the grave was to be delved. The Dean concludes his *Descriptione* with an account of Rona's distant associate, lonely Sula Sgeir. He alludes to the yearly excursion to this isle by the men from Ness, in order to collect a boat-load of sea-birds and their down and feathers.

The next account we have of Rona and of the ancient community dwelling upon it is that supplied to Sir Robert Sibbald, more than a century later, by the Lord Register, Sir George MacKenzie of Tarbat. This account enables us to picture the conditions of life endured by this remote colony. According to it, Rona for many generations had been inhabited by five families. Its population seldom exceeded thirty souls. The natives lived on commonwealth lines. When any of them had more children than his neighbours, the additional parental burden arising therefrom was taken off his shoulders by a family that numbered less.

By this time the Island had passed out of the possession of the hapless MacLeods of Lewis, and into the possession of the MacKenzies of Seaforth. Rona, therefore, was now the property of the Earl of Seaforth ; and, when Seaforth's

boat arrived annually in the summer, it took off, in addition to the customary dues in kind, the population in excess of thirty. As in the time of Dean Monro, the inhabitants paid yearly to their overlord a quantity of meal stitched up in sheep-skins, together with sea-fowls' feathers. Their sheep, according to the Lord Register, bore wool of a bluish colour.

The natives of Rona enjoyed the Romish religion, we are told by the same authority; and one of their number acted as chief, and issued commands and instructions to the rest of the community. So contented were they with their lot, that they always bewailed the misfortune of the supernumeraries who, each year, were obliged to be taken off to the Lewis by Seaforth's boat.

Whereas the Island itself yielded them fuel only in the form of turf, they maintained that the seas, by God's special dispensation, cast upon their cliffs an abundant supply of timber at all times.

The most illuminating of the several accounts of North Rona is, unquestionably, that given by Martin Martin, which first appeared in 1703. Martin obtained his information from several of the natives of Lewis who had been there, but principally from the Rev. Daniel Morrison, minister of Barvas, when the latter returned to Lewis from a visit to this remote fragment of his parish. Rona at that time formed part of the minister's glebe.

When Morrison landed on the Island, the inhabitants received him affectionately and, adopting their usual salutation, addressed him as follows: 'God save you, pilgrim! You are heartily welcome here, for we have had repeated apparitions of your person among us (after the manner of the second-sight), and we heartily congratulate your arrival in this our remote country.' One of the natives then pro-

ceeded to express his high esteem for the minister by walking round him sunwise, and at the same time blessing him and wishing him every happiness. Morrison strove hard to convince this islander that he already was sufficiently sensible of his kindly intention without the necessity for his expressing it in this extravagant way. But this frankness on his part was received by the community with profound misgiving. The natives could not understand why the minister should have taken exception to their performing this ancient and innocent ceremony; and they assured their visitor from Barvas that they not only regarded this homage as due to him in his especial position, since they looked upon him as their chief or patron, but that they would continue to perform it, whether he liked it or not!

Following upon this pleasant disputation, the Rev. Daniel Morrison was then conducted to the little village of Rona, wherein all the inhabitants resided, and where he entered some three enclosures. The indwellers severally saluted him and, taking him by the hand, gave expression to the phrase (in the Gaelic, of course), 'Traveller, you are welcome here!' They then escorted him to the house that had been assigned for his lodging. There the minister found that a seat had been provided for him in the nature of a bundle of straw set down on the floor. Some time then elapsed in general discussion; and thereafter the islanders retired to their respective dwellings. A sheep was then killed by each of the five families. The skins of these sheep were flayed off in a manner such as rendered them easily convertible into sacks. These skins were immediately filled with barley-meal, and presented to the minister as a mark of their esteem. 'Traveller,' said the spokesman of the Island, 'we are very sensible of the favour you have done us in coming so far with a design to instruct us in our way to happiness, and at

the same time to venture yourself on the great ocean ; pray be pleased to accept of this small present, which we humbly offer as an expression of our sincere love to you.'

The sheep-skins of barley-meal the minister accepted gratefully, for he was touched by the air of hospitality and of goodwill with which the islanders responded to his visit. On the minister's man they bestowed some pecks of meal, because they, in like manner, regarded him as a traveller. No such beneficence was showered on the boat's crew, since its members had been at Rona on previous occasions, and could not be regarded, therefore, as strangers. But they willingly supplied the crew with board and lodgings during the minister's sojourn in their midst.

Martin mentions the Chapel dedicated to Saint Ronan, or Saint Ronay, and encircled by a stone wall. This Chapel the inhabitants kept in a state of great perfection. Every day they swept it. On Sunday mornings they assembled in the Chapel to repeat the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. On the altar lay a big plank, some ten feet in length. In this plank holes had been made at an interval of roughly a foot apart ; and in each hole was placed a stone to which the natives ascribed different virtues. One such stone is said to have possessed the power of promoting speedy delivery to a woman in travail.

At the time of the Rev. Daniel Morrison's visit, the natives owned both cows and sheep. They had, forby, a supply of barley and oats. They led a harmless existence, 'being perfectly ignorant of most of those vices that abound in the world.' Of wealth in the form of money they knew nothing, having had no occasion for it. They neither bought nor sold : such commodities as they needed, they obtained by barter. Though they are said to have been fastidious in their dealings with one another as regards such expressions

of private property as their respective fishings, they were strict in their observance of the Tenth Commandment. Contented with their conditions as regards food, shelter, and raiment, they did not covet riches. And, although they always maintained a hospitable attitude towards strangers, they took very little interest in the rest of mankind. Apart from the esteem and affection in which they held the inhabitants of northern Lewis, they were interested in no one but themselves.

The Island supported five families at the time of Morrison's visit. Each family occupied its own dwelling-house, to which was attached a barn and a byre. The houses were built of stone; and the roofs of the same were thatched with straw kept down by straw ropes poised with heavy stones. In order to act as a wind-break, and also to keep off rain and snow, a stone porch was erected in front of each door. In matters of clothing, they dressed in the same way as did their Ness neighbours; and, of course, they spoke the same tongue.

Few things astonished a native of Rona, when he arrived on the mainland of Lewis, more than to discover that there were so many people in the world. One of the greatest curiosities to the inhabitants was the sight of a horse. For countless generations they had furrowed the soil of their remote Isle with the ancient *cas-chrom* or 'bent-foot' plough; and at no time do they appear to have possessed a horse. When a Rona boy arrived in Lewis, and heard a horse neigh, he enquired whether the animal was laughing at him! According to Martin, the natives were always 'mightily pleased at the sight of horses,' albeit this scarcely can be said of the boy who, on noticing a colt running toward him, instantly fled with fright, and leapt into a patch of nettles!

This reminds one of the St. Kildan who went to Glasgow,

and felt as though he had dropped out of the clouds. When he saw a pair of horses drawing a coach, which he took to be a tiny house with two men seated inside, he was of opinion that the horses actually were drawing the coach with their tails. The same native was taken greatly with the movement of the coach's wheels ; but he thought that only a coachman who was mad would sit on the roof of the little house, when he might have been safer and more comfortable on the back of one of the horses !

Another native of Rona, afforded the opportunity of travelling as far afield as Coul, in Ross-shire, was dumb-founded by everything that came his way ; but few things surprised—nay, terrified—him more than the noise made by those who walked across the floor of the room above him. He verily believed that the house was toppling about his ears.

As might have been expected in such lonely and austere surroundings, the inhabitants harboured many superstitions. They believed, for example, that only after the death of the Earl of Seaforth, or of the minister, did they hear or see the cuckoo on Rona.

Somewhere about the year 1689, a plague of rats, in some unaccountable manner, visited Rona, and devoured all the islanders' corn. Shortly afterwards, it is said, a number of seamen landed and deprived the islanders of their bull. It is thought that, as the result of misfortunes such as these, together with the fact that for a whole year weather conditions had prevented the landing of supplies from Lewis, the entire population perished. The Steward of St. Kilda, as it happened, had been driven on to Rona by a storm ; and there, at the side of a rock, he found a dead woman with a dead child at her breast. Some years later, however, the minister of Barvas sent forth a new colony to the Island,

duly provisioned. The boat sent to Rona by the minister the following year, for the purpose of landing further supplies and of collecting dues from the colony, was lost, with the result that at this stage there ensues a period during which we learn nothing of happenings on Rona. How the new plantation fared, no one quite knows. There can be little doubt that it endured great privation, and possibly extinction.

From the time of the visit of the Rev. Daniel Morrison, which must have been prior to 1703, until about 1812, we appear to know nothing of Rona or of Sula Sgeir. In 1812 the Island was visited occasionally by boats from the *Fortunée*, then engaged in cruising in these waters. Two years later, Dr. John MacCulloch, the tiresome 'Stone Doctor,' landed on Rona; and, from the fact that the women and children fled and hid themselves on his arrival, MacCulloch makes the deduction that at this time visits to Rona must have been few and far between.

MacCulloch failed to effect a landing on Sula Sgeir. But he was justifiably proud of his having succeeded in setting foot on Rona. 'To have visited Barra and Rona,' he wrote, 'gives a claim to distinction scarcely less in their estimation than to have explored the sources of the Nile or the Niger.' It should be mentioned that in olden times the name, Barra, or more often North Barra, was applied to Sula Sgeir.

MacCulloch found one cottar and his family on Rona. The cottar's name was Kenneth MacCraigie. For services rendered, Kenneth received food for himself and his family, and two pounds paid in garments which had to clothe six persons—the total population of Rona at the time. Kenneth apparently was tied to the Island for a term of eight years. In order to remove from him and his family the temptation that in all probability would have resulted in their drowning,

he was not permitted to have a boat. The family possessed a cow that had been brought from Lewis when in milk ; and from the milk of sheep it prepared cheeses, some of which MacCulloch took away with him.

The last family to inhabit North Rona was that of a shepherd named Donald MacLeod, who was known among the people of Ness as King of Rona. In 1844 Donald and his dependants returned to Lewis. Except for the annual sheep-shearing visits paid by Mr. MacFarquhar and his party, and for the solitary exile on the Island of two men who perished there in 1885, Rona has remained unpeopled since. Six years after this final evacuation (1850), Sir James Matheson, who in 1844 had purchased the Lewis from the trustees of the MacKenzies of Seaforth, offered this lone, Atlantic outpost as a gift to the Government, with the suggestion that it should be used as a penal settlement. The Government wisely declined the offer.

Accounts of more recent visits to Rona are of less interest, since they are all subsequent to the evacuation. In 1857, and again in 1860, T. S. Muir went to Rona and carried out minute investigations of an archæological and ecclesiological nature, records of which are to be found in his extensive writings. Accurate plans and measurements of the Chapel, known as *Teampull Rona*, were made by him.

The Chapel, of course, is the most interesting structure on the Island. At the time of Muir's visit, it consisted for the most part of a rounded heap of stones, roofed over with turf. The cell within measured 11 feet 6 inches in length, and 7 feet 6 inches in width at the floor. Its maximum height was 9 feet 3 inches. Other details may be found in Muir's description, which is very complete. Muir had the advantage of being able to set down details and measurements of the Chapel when it was much less of a ruin than

it is to-day. The Chapel at the present time is falling into rapid dilapidation ; and, as Malcolm Stewart observes in his delightful volume entitled *Ronay*, 'it would be absolutely unforgivable if this unique building were permitted to become a total ruin.' To-day the Chapel is occupied by representatives of the feathered clans. Its corners and crannies are the nesting-place of the fulmar petrel.

During the last quarter of a century, both Rona and Sula Sgeir have been visited frequently, other than by the men from Ness, who yearly sail to the former principally to attend to the sheep, and to the latter to obtain some of the countless solan geese frequenting its cliffs. The Duchess of Bedford landed on Rona in 1907, and again in 1910. In 1914, just three weeks after the outbreak of the Great War, the cruiser, *Sappho*, went to North Rona to search the Island, it having been rumoured that the enemy was using it as an aircraft base—a purpose to which it scarcely could lend itself, as was demonstrated subsequently. In December, 1915, the Second and Fourth Battle Squadrons, accompanied by the *Iron Duke*, proceeded westward from the Orkneys to carry out target-practice at Sula Sgeir ; and in 1924 some of the Commissioners of Historic Monuments disembarked at Rona.

In the summer of 1927, my late friend, Dr. John Wilson Dougal, of Edinburgh, sailed northward with Mr. MacFarquhar from Port of Ness, and spent some considerable time both on Rona and on Sula Sgeir with his geological hammer. In the early autumn of 1930 and of 1931, Mr. Malcolm Stewart, aforementioned, landed on Rona ; and in the summer of 1932 he visited the gannet isle of Sula Sgeir.

The story of Sula Sgeir, like that of Rona, is inseparable from that of Ness. Though from time immemorial crews of Ness seamen have made excursions to this lonely rock in

order to obtain boat-loads of solan geese, it is visited less frequently than Rona. The annual sojourn on Sula Sgeir of the Ness fowlers is usually from seven to ten days' duration, when weather permits a landing at all. Storms have been known to detain the fowlers for several weeks; and this is why they always see to it that they embark from the Port of Ness well provisioned in the matter of food, drinking water, and fuel.

Although Sula Sgeir is deeply indented by three small bays and several caves, it possesses no beach. Like Rona, it is shore-less. Thus, when the Ness men disembark on the landing-cliff, where a ledge affords foothold of about six inches in width, they haul their craft, weighing roughly a ton, up the precipitous cliffs to a height of sixty feet, and secure it there with strong ropes against storms. At this altitude the boat remains until the crew is ready to return to the Port of Ness.

These fowling parties have been known to reach Ness with as many as 2,800 solans. Though the Ness fowlers slay the solan goose in such numbers, they have a sort of traditional affection for this bird. It is known among them as Brenhilda's Bird.

With Rona and Sula Sgeir are associated many weird stories, both of olden times and of times more recent. Such stories may be heard from the lips of the people of Ness, any day of the year. In June, many, many years ago, a crew from Ness, when on a fowling expedition, had its boat wrecked in landing on Sula Sgeir. For several weeks the marooned islanders maintained themselves on the flesh of sea-fowl. A search for the Ness men brought the revenue cruiser, *Prince of Wales*, to Sula Sgeir in the month of August. The cruiser was commanded by one, Captain Oliver, who landed some of his men to make a thorough investigation.

They noticed the wrecked boat, and also an oar stuck up on end, with a pair of trousers affixed to it. A pot containing birds' flesh hung over a sodden fire. Nowhere on the Island could any humans be found. It was surmised either that all of them had been drowned, or that they had been taken off by another vessel. Time passed; and nothing more was heard of the missing crew until the following October, when a Russian vessel, homeward-bound, encountered a Stornoway boat in the Orkneys, and informed the crew of the latter that she had taken a number of men off Sula Sgeir, and landed them on Rona. Captain Oliver then steamed out to Rona, where he found the shipwrecked Lewismen in process of consuming the last of the food on the Island. Great was the rejoicing in Ness, and indeed throughout the Northern Hebrides, when ultimately they were landed on the mainland of Lewis again.

Except for the annual excursion from Ness of Mr. Alexander MacFarquhar and his shepherds and fowlers, Rona now remains little but a grim reminder of a race that faced its indescribable solitude and desolation. Untended sheep roam over its hillsides: grey seals sing in its caverns: sea-birds innumerable inhabit not merely every ledge of its cliffs, but also every nook of the old, primitive village, and of St. Ronan's Chapel. The quern-stones, that crushed the grain of the ancient inhabitants, lie buried deep in the grassy turf.

For weeks on end, and sometimes even for months brooding fogs envelop this, the loneliest of the British Isles; and for more than half the year the storms of the Atlantic, unfettered, reverberate through the ruined, ghost-haunted homesteads of a vanished people.

A GRAVE AT RODIL.

*Among the timeless grasses
 A greying headstone stands.
 That boy once fished these rivers
 Which spill, ice-cold, on sands
 Fresh pleated into ripples
 By shell-tipped mermaids' hands.*

*He loved this haunted island,
 Elysium of rods,
 Its treeless Faery landscape
 Of kelp-hung rocks and sods ;
 The Hebridean silence
 And twilight of the gods.*

*He knew soft-spoken crofters
 To harsh starvation born,
 Their crumbling turf-grown homesteads,
 Small rotted plots of corn
 Self-sown beside the heather,
 Roped haystacks winter-torn.*

*He visited black houses
 Wherein each woman weaves
 The tweed which fragrant peat-reek
 Indelibly receives ;
 Where nets adorn the roof-tree,
 Wild marigolds the eaves.*

A GRAVE AT RODIL.

*In freedom and enchantment
This boy was reared ; and died
Submerged within a warship ;
At length the random tide
Returned him to his country
His kin to sleep beside.*

KATHLEEN COLLISON-MORLEY.

LILIES OF THE VALLEY.

*Slow their silver bells were swinging
By our garden pale,
Soft their faery chimes were ringing,
Lilies of the vale.
Hand in hand we came together
On that day of days ;
Golden glowing June's glad weather
As we plucked three sprays.*

*One we offered to the Maiden ;
One against my breast,
With your fragrant kisses laden,
Softly drooped to rest.*

*One you took to keep, a treasure
From our wedding day ;
Whispering, though Time should measure
Days and years away,
You would, while that blossom keeping
Morning, night and noon,
Were it but in dream when sleeping,
Wed with me each June.*

ÚI BRÍUIN.

BIG JOHN.

BY FRANK SPROTT.

BIG JOHN's master was a tough, wiry, little man with whom I did some shooting in S. India many years ago. He and another friend of mine and I used to tramp for hours together on the look out for anything shootable from jungle fowl to tiger, and very difficult did my friend and I find it to keep pace with the little man, who had the longest stride of anyone I have ever met and, in addition, seemed to be able to keep it up all day.

Big John—so called to distinguish him from Little John, who was an ordinary fox terrier—was half fox-terrier and half bull-terrier, in appearance taking after the former mostly, but having a good deal of the weight, width of skull and shoulder and neck muscle of the old type of bull-terrier. A sturdy, virile sort of dog.

He had made a great reputation for himself—down Travancore way, I believe it was—a couple of years before by following up a wounded tiger and staying with him all one night and until he was tracked down and finished off the next day. Of course, when Big John was missed the evening the tiger was wounded, it had been assumed that either the tiger had got him or perhaps a panther, so that, when he was found the next day still quietly keeping in touch with the wounded beast, his reputation as quite an exceptional hunter was made.

Big John's master had only been with us a few months, when he was ordered to go to a place to which it was quite impossible for him to take his dogs, and so he asked me if

I would look after them for him and, if also I had to leave before he could claim them, pass them on to a good home.

Knowing the dogs a little and also being somewhat curious about Big John's unusual reputation, I accepted the charge gladly and hoped that the chance might come my way of trying him out; and—if his reputation was justified—of watching his method of tackling such dangerous opponents as tiger or panther.

At that time I was managing a largish coffee estate, on and near which was plenty of jungle and thick lantana bush, which held a lot of game of sorts, but not at all easy to get at. There were several panther about and more than one tiger passed through the estate on his regular rounds and, whenever these were approximately due, I used to have my old shikari, Bima Gowda, on the look out for a kill or for pug-marks.

When Big John came to me, he was still perhaps in his prime as far as actual health and strength were concerned, but he was settled in his ways and deliberate and had begun to show signs of middle age. He quietly went his way and neither interfered with nor was molested by my other dogs. He was quite friendly and generally came out with me when riding or tramping round the estate or when I wandered out of an evening with a gun, but he was never demonstrative and I did not worry him to come out, if he did not want to, as he was obviously intelligent and sensible enough to keep himself fit and therefore probably had a perfectly sound canine reason for not coming.

That he had his own methods of hunting quickly became obvious and I could not make him alter them to suit my purpose, if my ideas did not happen to fit in with his, so I used to let him have his way and then, if it became obvious after a while that there was a difference of opinion between

us as to the correct way to conduct some particular beat, I would leave him to it and move on !

What usually happened was that, while walking along a road or a path, Big John would pick up a scent and slip quietly into the jungle. I would stay where I was or move along to what seemed to me to be a likely vantage-point for a shot. Presently perhaps without a sound a jungle sheep (muntjac) would scurry across the road and I would be taken completely by surprise or get a hurried snap shot as the case might be. Invariably though a few seconds behind the animal would emerge Big John at a quiet lope and that beat would be over ! He had done his bit in getting the animal across the road and, if I had misjudged the place where it was most likely to cross or had been too slow with the shot, then that was my affair. The main difficulty was that the dog hunted absolutely mute, never rushed or startled his quarry and the whole proceedings took place in complete silence and with practically no indication of what was about to happen. His technique and jungle-craft were, I am sure, perfect and perhaps, if I had had him longer, I might have guessed his intentions better and been more successful.

At times, of course, Big John would get on to an animal that insisted upon trying to break the wrong way or else perhaps a sounder of pig which, like their Sussex brethren, 'wu'dn't be druv'. On these occasions I used to wait for ten minutes or so, perhaps hearing an occasional far-away scuffle in the jungle, and then decide that I must get on with my job, if this occurred when I was walking from one gang of coolies to another some considerable distance away. A few calls to Big John producing no immediate response, I would leave him to it, knowing full well that there is none so deaf as he that will not hear.

On one occasion my head maistry¹ happened to follow me a short while after I had left Big John to his own devices when, across the road in front of the maistry, streamed a whole family of pig, ranging from huge, formidable boar to toothsome squeakers, and at the back of all came Big John the Drover ! He had felt impelled to finish his job, although it had taken some considerable time to round them all up and to persuade 'paterfamilias,' who was probably nearly ten times the weight of Big John, to take the direction that he wished them to take.

Some months after Big John had come to me, I received khubber² that fresh tracks of a tiger had been seen on a certain part of the estate and so, as there seemed to be a fair chance that Stripes might still be somewhere in the vicinity, I determined to have a small beat of a strip of jungle where I might get a chance of a shot, if he happened to be lying up there and could be persuaded to break cover in the right direction.

Somewhat to my surprise one of the 'stops' reported that a small tiger did actually break back past him during the beat and that he had gone off in a direction that might take him off the estate altogether and on to a neighbouring one. I was rather disappointed, as this was the nearest I had been able to get to a tiger up to that time, but I decided that I would not disturb things any more that day in the hopes that he might come back before long.

Early the next morning, however, I was awakened soon after dawn by a maistry of mine, who was ordinarily a sound, steady sort of fellow and a good shot, but who was now breathless and obviously badly scared.

He told me that the previous evening he had sat up in the crotch of a Ceara rubber-tree near the beat we had just had

¹ Gancz, Headman.

² Information.

in the hopes of bagging a pig. The tree was near one of the big estate roads and commanded the openings of one or two well-used game-tunnels through a belt of thick lantana on the other side of the road. For the purpose that he had intended the site was ideal, but it was anything but a satisfactory one, he thought, for what had actually occurred.

It had been one of those moonlight nights, when the light is shifting and uncertain with patches of bright moonlight and inky black shadows; a cloud moves across the moon, and whilst sight is obscured for a few moments, one has a feeling that many things are hurriedly changing places. The sort of night, indeed, when nerves are a bit jumpy for no apparent reason.

The maistry had been sitting in his tree for some time, when suddenly he saw a large shadow emerge from one of the game-tunnels opposite. He could not see the animal at all clearly, but, what with being a bit jumpy, stiff and cold, he had a pot-shot at the shadow with slugs! The instant result was apparently all hell let loose, and the wretched fellow was petrified when he realised that he had fired at and evidently hit a large tiger, whilst he himself was sitting in a perfectly open tree not more than 7 or 8 feet from the ground and probably in full view of the tiger! According to his terrified fancy, the tiger had rolled in the road tearing up great chunks of earth and roaring terrifically and had then dragged itself back through the game-tunnel, after which he had sat frozen with fear and cold until the dawn and without daring to move.

I was very fed up at hearing his story, as it seemed to me that unwittingly he had bagged a good-sized old tiger that I had been after many a time, when his regular rounds had brought him into my vicinity. From the maistry's description he sounded to be a badly wounded animal, so, as the

place was only about three-quarters of a mile from my bungalow, I decided that I would just slip down and see the marks, then, having made my deductions, I would leave him to stiffen up a bit more, whilst I started the labour on their day's work. Somewhat sadly I reflected that I should then probably find a dead or completely disabled tiger and not be able to call it mine.

I found a very different story, however, when I got to the spot. Instead of the torn-up road and the pools of blood that I had expected to find, there were just two groups of long and deep claw-marks in the road and a few spots of blood. What I think had happened was that the tiger got such a shock from surprise and from the two slugs that hit him (one of which I found later embedded in the muscles of his jaw and the other in a muscle in his back) that he gave a jump, making those great scratches in the ground as he did so, and perhaps actually did roll over in pain and anger as he landed. Luckily for my maistry he must have lost direction, so stood roaring in anger but without seeing anything to charge at and, at length, turned back up the tunnel, from which he had just emerged.

This put quite a different complexion on matters and, as inclination combined with a sense of public obligation, I decided that a wounded, angry and probably quite active tiger should not be allowed to roam at large in a fairly thickly populated area and that work on the estate must look after itself temporarily, whilst I got after that tiger without delay.

Fortunately also it was a time of year when there was only straightforward routine work going on and nothing that required urgent attention. Accordingly I got hold of some coolies and sent messages to my head shikari, old Bima Gowda, who lived a couple of miles away, to come at once with the big spear that I used in case I had to follow up

an animal in thick *lantana*, and also to my second shikari and house servants to bring down my double-barrelled 12-bore shot-gun with lethal bullet and slug cartridges, my .318 rifle and the dogs.

If I had had any sense, I would have had something to eat sent down too, but I was beginning to get a bit excited by then and did not think about food at the time, so I missed my breakfast that day and later regretted my thoughtlessness.

A few of the estate coolies, hearing what was on, began to turn up, and then arrived my second shikari with gun, rifle and dogs. As I felt sure that old Bima Gowda would not be long in coming, I determined to make a start, and I thought that here at last was the opportunity to test the truth of Big John's reputation.

First of all, therefore, I told one of my servants to hold Big John, whilst I took the other dogs up to the scent. Without exception they took one sniff at the tracks, down went their tails and they slunk away with nervous backward glances. That was quite enough for them, thank you!

Then I called Big John up and put him on to the scent.

The dog stiffened and all his hackles rose, but after a few moments he turned and walked stiffly away with an expression as much as to say, 'No thanks, I know all about that smell, but I'm not as young as I was or as agile and I think that this is a bit early in the morning and unexpected and all that sort of thing; go and play yourself, if you want to, but count me out.'

Said I, 'Come, come, Big John, pull yourself together, old man, and remember that reputation of yours. Just come over and have another sniff and then show us how you dealt with little things like tigers in your palmy days.'

Big John came back to me and again I put him on to the

scent. Again he stiffened and his hackles rose, but he continued sniffing, and instead of walking away, he moved very, very slowly towards the tunnel in the lantana.

He looked round at me and his mind was obviously made up. His look said quite clearly, 'Right oh ! I'm with you, but just get your fellows ready and follow me.'

Old Bima Gowda had by this time arrived with the long, heavy spear, whose haft was made from an old Toddy Palm and was just about the toughest thing in woods that I have ever met and also very heavy. The dear old man was just the fellow to have behind one with a nice big spear too ! He gave one a comfortable sort of feeling. Although he was getting to be quite an old man and showed the effects of a wild and hectic youth, he was still enormously powerful and I felt quite certain that at the first hint of a charge, down would go the haft of that spear with the ball of his great foot behind it and he would stand like a rock to the charge and take the tiger full on the point.

But let us get back to Big John, who stood waiting for us at the mouth of the tunnel. Those who have never shikarred in terribly thick bush such as lantana may think that I was over-cautious, but I was not looking for casualties of either myself or any of the coolies, so I arranged what I considered to be the safest method of tracking through the lantana, albeit a slow one perhaps. Big John obviously approved of it, however ! First the dog moved a few feet into the tunnel very slowly and carefully ; next came two coolies cutting the lantana back to make a reasonably broad path ; then myself with my shot-gun loaded with a lethal bullet in the right barrel and slugs in the choke ; behind me came Bima Gowda with the spear and behind him again came my second shikari with the rifle in case it might be needed later on.

The orders were that at the first sign of a charge the two coolies were to throw themselves back against the walls of lantana and, if possible and time permitted, get to the rear. This would give me a clear field of fire and I had great faith in the lethal bullet at close range for such soft-skinned game as tiger and panther. If I did not manage to stop the brute completely with lethal bullet and slugs at a few yards' range, I would throw myself back and leave Bima Gowda free to take him on the point of the spear at the very mouth of the tunnel and I should also be able to get back to my rifle with seven shots in it. The general idea seemed to be all right, but perhaps it was just as well that its efficacy was not tested.

I kept my eyes glued on Big John as we slowly cut our way down the tunnel. The dog did not attempt to range off on his own, but kept moving slowly just a few feet in front of the cutters. After we had gone some distance, there was a branch in the tunnel to the left, and it was here perhaps that I most appreciated the wisdom—and the nerve—of the dog. The tiger had obviously been up this tunnel either before or after being wounded, so it could not be disregarded. If we had decided to cut our way up this tunnel first, we should have been in just the same position as if we had elected to go straight on, as in either case we should have been entirely unprotected in the rear; not at all a pleasant position with a wounded tiger in the neighbourhood.

Big John settled the matter—he looked back and said quite clearly, 'You fellows just hold on a moment and I will go up this tunnel and make sure that the tiger is not up there.' Accordingly I stopped the coolies cutting and watched Big John as first he looked long and intently up both the tunnels before disappearing very slowly and silently

up the tunnel to the left. We waited and listened anxiously for several minutes before the dog came back with an 'all clear' expression on his face. He then turned along the main tunnel again and we resumed our progress. As we cut past the side tunnel I sent Bima Gowda up it and he reported that the tiger had definitely been along it and had lain down a short distance up. After a bit more cutting the lantana gradually thinned, and we came out on to a space covered with knee-deep grass, through which the track of the tiger showed clearly where the dew had been brushed off in his passage. He was obviously making for a short, steep-banked nullah, the head of which lay quite close and which debouched on to some small paddy-fields with a goodish patch of jungle on the other side.

Since the tiger had lain down fairly close to where he had been wounded, he was obviously disinclined to move very far, and also, as he had not been at all hustled, it seemed probable that he would go into the nullah and stay there. This nullah was quite narrow and short, but it was more or less impenetrable—particularly with a wounded tiger in it—with its almost sheer sides mostly 8 to 10 feet deep and filled with thick undergrowth and several trees and clumps of bamboo. A very good hide for a tiger, in fact.

I determined to try to drive him out—if he was still there, which I felt sure he was—by the paddy-fields, so I gave instructions for a number of beaters to collect stones and range themselves on either side at the head of the nullah without noise and then, after allowing me plenty of time to get into position down in the paddy-fields, to try to drive the tiger down to me by moving slowly along the edges of the nullah throwing stones into it and shouting.

I started to move off to take up my position and whistled to Big John to come with me. There was no sign of him,

however, so I left him to his self-appointed job, whatever it might be, and carried on with mine. And very small and lonely I felt too, when I found myself standing ankle-deep in soft mud and water with the likelihood of a very angry tiger bursting out of the bushes a few yards away from me at any moment. In fact, I wished myself anywhere but where I was just then.

Soon after I got settled old Bima Gowda started the beat, and it very quickly became apparent that Stripes was present and also that, having found 'the better 'ole,' nothing was going to induce him to leave it.

With the first few roars every beater shinned up the nearest tree—most of the labour on the estate seemed to have left work by that time and come to join in the fun—and I think only the two shikaris were left at the top of the nullah, myself at the bottom and Big John nowhere to be seen. The beaters then proceeded to have a game with the tiger, who was by this time working himself up into a towering rage. Those along one side of the nullah (all up trees, of course) would give a concerted series of yells, which had the effect of driving the tiger nearly frantic with fury, as he charged across the narrow nullah with short roars that were absolutely stunning in their volume and concentrated ferocity. There would, however, be nothing to be seen and perfect silence would reign by the time the tiger had made his short charge and then, after a pause, the beaters on the other side of the nullah would do their stuff, and back would charge the tiger more angry than before, if that were possible.

The din was simply terrific; feeding time in the Lion House at the Zoo was as a quiet chant by a cathedral choir compared to the full-throated college yell on the last Sunday of term in the chapel of a big public school.

As soon as I realised that the tiger was not going to be driven out of his nullah, I left the paddy-field and worked my way up and down the sides of the nullah in an endeavour to get near enough for a glimpse of, and a shot at, the tiger as he charged across and across. The sides, however, were very thick with bush, which greatly restricted my movements, and I mostly had to crawl, so that I spent a long time without the slightest success—never, in fact, seeing more than a waving bush or sapling to indicate the tiger's whereabouts.

By degrees, of course, both sides had tired of the game and the tiger would only give an occasional roar in reply to a few desultory yells from the few beaters, who had stayed on to see the thing through or who were disinclined to leave the safety of their trees. By this time also I was beginning to feel decidedly weary, as I had had nothing to eat at all that morning, and I began to feel that the next move was up to me or we should arrive at a position of stalemate, which would be all in the favour of the tiger. I therefore crawled quietly round to find Bima Gowda and have a consultation with him. As luck would have it, I found both the shikaris near practically the only place where the bank of the nullah was comparatively clear of bushes and—more important still—I could hear the tiger breathing down below and apparently behind a clump of bamboo exactly opposite to this clear space. This seemed a heaven-sent opportunity to get a shot (under reasonable circumstances from my point of view, as to have crawled down into the nullah would have been sheer suicide), provided that the tiger could be stirred to wrath once more. He had been passive for some time, so I decided to let him rest in complete quiet for a bit longer with the idea that, having got quite comfortable and perhaps come to the conclusion that his tormentors had withdrawn for good, a sudden rude

disturbance of his peace might bring him to his feet in a charge with the terrain in our favour.

He was lying down apparently about 15 yards away, but, as soon as he rounded the bamboo clump, I reckoned that he would be at any rate partially in sight and would have to charge up a very steep bank—in fact almost a perpendicular one—of some 8 feet high. After a short interval we accordingly lined up very quietly at the edge of the nullah—myself with the shot-gun, Bima Gowda with the spear and the second shikari with the rifle—and then all together we yelled at the top of our lungs. The effect was electrical. With a succession of roars the tiger leapt up still full of fight and was so mad with rage at being disturbed again that he began crashing through the edge of the bamboo clump instead of rounding it properly.

Suddenly a huge, demoniac mask appeared clearly in front of me and not much below—the tiger was apparently on his hind legs—and instinctively my gun was at my shoulder and I fired without any conscious aim at all. The great head disappeared, there was a crash and then dead silence; it was uncanny and I glanced uneasily at old Bima Gowda. Then slowly rose in the bushes what appeared to be a huge forearm: up and up it came, until it too fell with a dull thud.

Coming so suddenly after the excitement and wild uproar of a few seconds before, that heavy thud and the complete stillness that followed were literally painful in their intense drama, and it was with considerable dislike and trepidation that I faced the prospect of slipping down that bank only a few feet away from a beast that indeed was almost certainly dead, but which had looked like the devil incarnate a few minutes before. However, there was nothing for it but to go and see.

We waited for a little while, throwing clods of earth into the bushes below, and, as these produced no answering movement, I covered Bima Gowda as he quietly slipped down with the spear and I then dropped down behind him. Very slowly and cautiously we rounded the bamboo clump, and there lay the tiger in a welter of blood and there also, quietly sitting *on* the carcase in complete ownership, was Big John !

I had long ago forgotten all about the dog, and yet for several hours in the midst of all that terrific din he must have been just steadily keeping touch with his quarry and was literally in at the death.

I would not have been in that dog's place during those hectic hours for all the gold in the Rand . . .

The tiger was a biggish, heavy beast for a hill tiger ; a little past his prime perhaps, but fat and in good condition. My shot had taken him full in the throat under his chin, as he stood on his hind legs, and the lethal bullet lay in the midst of his broken neck and had caused, of course, instant death with only the one movement of that dramatic paw.

The problem now arose of how to get the carcase home ? Big John added to this considerably by allowing no one to touch the dead tiger but myself and Bima Gowda. He flew at anyone else who came near, so when ropes and coolies arrived, Bima Gowda had to pick up a vehemently protesting dog, carry him up out of the nullah and hold him securely, while I saw to the adjusting of the ropes on the heavy body, which was then dragged out with a considerable amount of difficulty.

Once on the road we had to wait for a bullock-cart to arrive, and here Big John really had a beano. Usually a very quiet dog and not at all pugnacious, he now flew at the very considerable crowd that had collected and drove

them back to a respectable distance, and any pariah dog, that dared even to show itself, was instantly attacked by an avalanche of blazing, white fury—and when he had nobody to chase off Big John resumed his seat *on* the tiger.

It was just the same when the cart arrived; John had to be held while the tiger was hoisted in, and then in he hopped also and rode up to the bungalow in triumph sitting on the body of his victim.

S. India.

PEACE.

*We came to the valley of flowers, and it was evening;
Vivid the stars where the white snows hung like ghosts
Far in the foreign dark; and the flowers wept sweetness
Under our feet as we crushed them down in hosts.*

*I have known no peace since the song in the valley of flowers,
For they, the Tibetans that sang, poured all peace that is
Into the waiting air, to the mountains that drank it
With the hollow echoes waking ecstasies.*

*Peace yet profounder than the hushed rose the sky takes
At the setting sun; than the measureless, aching gleam
Of the sea when a lonely ship dips down the horizon,
And the strange, great wisdom of gods we feel in a dream.*

*I have heard the songs of the world, but for me, the singers
Touch not the peace that lies in the depths of song.
For the heart of peace is passionate, awful beauty
That, sad and compelled, we search for the whole day long.*

MARJORIE STANNARD.

BY THE WAY.

FOR all the first half of the year up to now the world has resembled nothing so much as an indiarubber ball, deflated and dented : everybody—at any rate everybody who has ever played games with children—knows the exasperation that descends upon the company when the ball (always, by that perversity of fate inseparable from human existence, the only ball discoverable) goes flobby ; by careful manipulation the dent is squeezed out and the semblance of a ball restored ; the very next blow and the dent—the same dent or another—is once more a mockery to exuberance and a laughing-stock to skill. So with the world of 1938 : Spain, China, Russia, Austria, Poland, Mexico—so rapidly have the dents appeared that there has been no squeezing space between them. And it is, unhappily, our only ball ; and, which is worse, we cannot, like a band of children, give up the game and take, with zest, to hide-and-seek instead. A great pity. However, the ball rolls on, and we with it—and Monaco has not yet sent an ultimatum to San Martino.

★ ★ ★

Every editor must, I suppose, be familiar with the contributor's covering letter, asserting that he (or she) ' may be allowed to observe that he (or she) has knowledge of the background depicted.' It sounds a reasonable enough observation ; possibly, if printed as a preface to the article or story, it would not be out of place, but then it is never intended to be so printed. Its intention is obvious—to make an impression upon the editor which the article or story is unable to make by itself ; as such it is rarely successful. But a whole

series of essays might be written about 'covering letters,' divided into sections according to their *genus*. There is the frankly boastful, the pseudo-modest, the *ad misericordiam*, the disingenuous, and—largest class of all—the completely superfluous ; an editor has hard work sometimes not to degenerate into a cynic. And yet he has his compensations—the new discovery and the ever-increasing list of friends.

* * *

'Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it shall come back to thee after many days,' said the prophet. This is true of most published utterances of which any trace may be discerned ; it is especially true of poetry, which works slowly, if at all. At all events it was with a deep sense of gratification that I was told a short while ago by Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis, who besides being an architect has long concerned himself with the beauties of the British Isles, both as Chairman of the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales and in other capacities, that he had used the lines about the desecration of Snowdon that I wrote in an hour of high indignation as long ago as 1914 with such skilful persistence that the 'barbarous shanty' that then disfigured the summit of that historic mountain is no more. Thanks be for this small mercy !

* * *

Inured as this generation has grown to the enactment of horrors, it still says much for the conscience of mankind that they do provoke indignation—as a result many of us live in a perpetual state of indignation. And, whatever our views upon affairs in general, the bombing of civilians, whether in Barcelona or farther afield in China, still excites disapprobation. This the Japanese have, as yet, hardly sufficiently appreciated ; but they are concerned, and their

friends also, to explain the reasons which have caused such things. Even apart from that, it is as well that the reasons for any big event, with its inevitable long and bitter repercussions, should be made manifest, and two books lie before me which attempt to expound the Japanese to English readers. They are as different in their attitude as in their contents: the first, by Willard Price—some of whose work has appeared in these pages—is titled by a question, *Where are you going, Japan?* (Heinemann, 15s. n.). Mr. Willard says in his Introduction 'he believes himself the fairest person on earth. But (he adds) the most biased fanatic believes the same of himself. So that gets us nowhere'—at any rate he earnestly strives to be fair, and he is in addition unfailingly graphic; he builds up, almost unconsciously, a frightening, and yet very interesting, picture of a race superbly conscious of their destiny to spread and to dominate—in Manchuria, in Korea, in China, in the Pacific, in the world. 'They will die rather than surrender. They are accustomed to a Spartan life. They need little. They are used not so much to a low standard of living as to a high standard of simplicity.' The second book, *Japan in China*, by Kiyoshi Kawakami (Murray, 5s. n.), is, in a sense, complementary; it seeks to prove China the aggressor and sets out the facts from the Japanese angle of vision; it says little as to the bombing beyond the assertion that military objectives were the targets aimed at. Perhaps the most interesting statement of an interesting, though inevitably prejudiced, argument is the admission that 'whether Japan will succeed or fail will depend largely upon foreign, i.e. Anglo-American, attitude.' The two books should be read together by anyone desiring enlightenment as to one of the major problems of this much-troubled earth.

★ ★ ★

Daughter of one Archbishop of Canterbury, wife to another, there have been few more gracious and kindly personalities than *Edith Davidson of Lambeth* (Murray, 9s. n.). Lightly veiling anonymity under the initials M. C. S. M., one who knew her well and loved her much—even as did all who came within her sphere, and that was by destiny unusually wide and varied—has now written a memoir, to which the present Archbishop of Canterbury has contributed a deeply felt little preface, which will be much valued by that large circle that will not readily allow their remembrance of Lady Davidson to fade. M. C. S. M. has written her labour of love with an intimate knowledge with which no one else could have written it—and it was one that was fully worth the writing.

* * *

One swallow does not make a spring, but a few long-haired nincompoops can create a delusion ; there are in consequence people who believe that poets must necessarily be imbeciles. *Rough Shooting from Month to Month*, by Julian Tennyson (Black, 10s. 6d. n.), may help to dissipate that belief. Mr. Tennyson's poetry has appeared with acclamation in these pages more than once ; he now publishes the fruits of his experience as an amateur game-keeper and manager of a rough shoot. Every poet—except perhaps the political modernist—must be a nature lover, if not a naturalist ; in this practical and very useful book the study of nature is evident to some purpose, and it will be read with pleasure, and digested with profit, by all who know that there is a great deal more to be got out of shooting than merely marksmanship and that partridge, pheasant, hare, rabbit and duck have not only other enemies besides Man but another existence besides being at the wrong end of a gun. In fact, a

book for many more than those to whom it will have its primary appeal.

* * *

An end will come some day presumably to the number of ways in which undesirables can be done to death in crowded places, with a lengthy list of visitors any one of whom has excellent reason for removing the undesirable and an abundance of opportunity—but that day is not yet. Nevertheless, I cannot readily recall anyone so undesirable as James Oliver Railton, bank manager, surrounded by quite so many people who loathed him and were—or might have been—present after hours at the bank when he met his appointed demise as Basil Francis has contrived to represent in *Death at the Bank* (Constable, 7s. 6d. n.). Murder, as all readers of stories of this kind know, is an excessively jolly art ; everyone is always delighted and cracks jokes about it gaily as the mess is cleared up—that is because the victim is always an undesirable ; in this story, Railton being more than averagely undesirable, the hilarity is unrestrained. But has the author ever tried to give anyone, however undesirable, such a bang on the head with a poker that blood and brains were strewn on the carpet ? ‘Sanguinary Cadaver’ indeed, and a jolly good time was had by all—or nearly all. Sherlock Holmes, confronted by the problem of the harpoon driven right through a corpse, made experiments upon a dead pig, slung for the purpose ; if Detective-Sergeant Dean had taken him for his model—well, in that case, probably the guilty would never have been discovered. ‘Have you tried to drive a harpoon through a body ? No ? Tut, tut, my dear sir, you must really pay attention to these details. My friend Watson could tell you that I spent a whole morning in that exercise.’ But alas ! ‘the Sherlock Holmes Society, like the Red-Headed

League, is dissolved'—and no more can I meet the experts round its table to discuss such vital matters.

* * *

Dust-covers have some advantages or they would not have become universal; they have also snares, the greatest of which, more especially in the case of novels, is the printing upon them of a summary of the story. Most people prefer to read a story that is unknown, and always when the plot is given away much of the initial interest is dissolved—and summaries, even if accurate, must invariably be bald. I would particularly recommend to all readers of *The Undisciplined Heart*, by Gwen Clear (Constable, 7s. 6d. n.), that they should refrain from reading the summary printed on the inside of the dust-cover: if they do, their enjoyment of a decidedly interesting and unusual novel will be much diminished. And that would be a pity; it is a story that deserves many readers, a story of temperaments told with delicacy and insight much above the average, and it is not, as it is described, 'the story of a dream that materialised in a disaster.' It is a story of Audrey Warrender and Emily Cavanagh and—the dust-cover notwithstanding—holds the attention as closely as it enlists the sympathy: a fine piece of work.

G.

THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 176.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page v, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach him by 30th June.

'If to these precepts you attend,
No ——— need I send
And so I rest your constant friend.'

1. 'Thou ——— unravished bride of quietness'
2. 'But the sun through the mirk blinks blythe in
my ———
"I'll shine on ye yet in your ain countree."'
3. 'Who ——— to their dark wintry bed
The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,'
4. 'I am that which began ;
—— of me the years roll ;'
5. 'I hear the ——— about thy keel ;
I hear the bell struck in the night ;'
6. 'My ——— and only Love, I pray
That little world of thee
Be govern'd by no other sway
Than purest monarchy ;'

Answer to Acrostic 174, April number : 'In Memphian Grove or Green (Milton : 'Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity'). 1. Grow-inG (Burns : 'Lament for Culloden'). 2. RiveR (Hood : 'The Bridge of Sighs'). 3. OpE (Crashaw : 'Wishes to his Supposed Mistress'). 4. VaynE (Spenser : 'Prothalamion'). 5. EveN (Wordsworth : 'Ode on the Intimation of Immortality').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss Rosa J. Perry, Beechen Green, Sandy Lane, Ormskirk, and Major Luard, 14 Woodlane, Falmouth, who are invited to choose books as mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*

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P.N.N. 43

BOOK NOTES FOR JUNE

An unusual travel book

FROM Prague to New England, from Montreal to Florence, from Budapest to Wales, Basil Maine has travelled in his calling of music and things appertaining to music. But the distinction of his new book, *People Are Much Alike*, is that it sets out to show the similarity in peoples who, while they may live almost poles apart, yet have much in common. Many entertaining anecdotes, incidents, and characters appear in his pages; conversations with all sorts of personalities are brilliantly quoted, and he gives a most valuable account of the traveller who builds up some concrete philosophy out of many wanderings and who can appreciate the many beauties both of human characteristics and of natural splendour of scenery; and his wise reflections on all sorts of subjects make this book a most entertaining and stimulating volume.



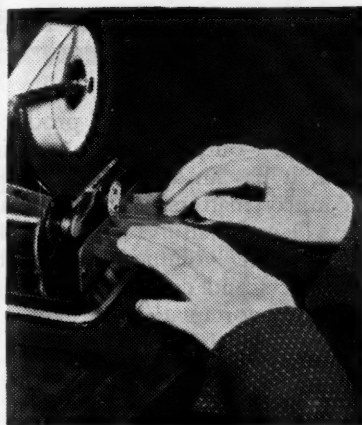
BASIL MAINE

The Poetry of Montrose

JAMES GRAHAM, Marquess of Montrose, is famous for the verse of poetry beginning "He either fears his fate too much." Few people know that he was in the habit of writing poetry as a relaxation from the other arduous duties of his most ardent life. Unfortunately none of his manuscripts exist, and much of his poetic work is lost, but scholarship has traced back as far as possible the original versions of his remaining poems, and the collection, edited and annotated by J. L. Weir, with the title, *Poems of James Graham, First Marquis of Montrose 1612-50*, will establish itself as the definite text. It will be issued with a prefatory note by Lord Tweedsmuir, P.C., G.C.M.G.

A Geography of Production

THE continual urbanisation of rural districts is greatly lessening the knowledge of how Great Britain produces the food that finds its way onto millions of tables every day. Interest in food so



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BOOK NOTES FOR JUNE

often begins and ends with appetite, and the facts of food production are generally left to the specialist. But, in addition to it being a subject that concerns us all, it has an appeal linked up with the great fascination of all country matters. This general appeal is well brought out by Sir A. Daniel Hall in his new book *Our Daily Bread*, and he makes a fascinating volume out of such facts as the origin of foods, the districts and countries of their origin, and a hundred and one other important details.

Travel in Arabia

FREYA STARK's fascinating record of her exploration of the ancient incense routes of the Hadhramaut, *The Southern Gates of Arabia*, which took her alone through country still mainly unexplored and unmapped, added to a reputation already high from her previous volume, "The Valleys of the Assassins." As fearless traveller and classic writer she stands unequalled amongst modern explorers, and readers will welcome a Cheap Edition at 7s. 6d. net of her book on the Hadhramaut. It has 24 pages of illustrations and 2 maps, and reveals with immense entertainment a country at once unknown but ancient, dangerous, yet full of the interest that makes danger a secondary consideration.



FREYA STARK

A Tale of a Puma

FROM the day when, as a furry kitten, Tawny the Puma cub tried to catch a butterfly and fell out of the lair until the great day when, as a full-grown animal, he had to make his great leap from the cliff top into the cedar to escape man and dogs, his life was passed in the middle of great dangers and stern excitements. Allen Chaffee, author of the well-known "Wandy the Wild Pony," has made another fascinating child's book, and *Tawny Goes Hunting*, with its delightful illustrations in colour by Paul Bransom, will be eagerly awaited—and more eagerly read.

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THANKS !

To a friend, whose address has been mislaid, for his kindness in sending *The Cornhill Magazine* regularly for some years to FATHER FIRKINS, of Modderpoort, South Africa. The magazine is greatly appreciated.

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JUNE 1938

	PAGE
EDITH WHARTON	Robert Sencourt 721
AN IDYLL	The Rev. P. B. Clayton, C.H. 737
TO A CLOCK: <i>A Sonnet</i>	The Rev. F. Keeling Scott 746
THE BELL: <i>A Story</i>	M. A. Peart 747
GIANTS AND MONSTERS	C. E. Lawrence 767
THE FORTUNATE DISASTER: <i>A Story</i>	C. T. Stoneham 781
TRAVELLING IN BYGONE ENGLAND	Sir Charles Petrie, Bt. 791
WITH A BUNCH OF VIOLETS: <i>A Poem</i>	Frank Eyre 802
SQUIBS AND THE DRUIDS: <i>A Story</i>	M. de B. Daly 803
RONA	Alasdair Alpin MacGregor 826
Two Poems: I. A GRAVE AT RODIL	Kathleen Collison-Morley 841
II. LILIES OF THE VALLEY	Úi Briúin 842
BIG JOHN: <i>A Story</i>	Frank Sprott 843
PEACE: <i>A Poem</i>	Marjorie Stannard 857
BY THE WAY	858
LITERARY COMPETITION	864

Material already published, whether in the United States or elsewhere, is not acceptable.

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